THE INEFFICACY OF PREACHING.

THE

INFELICITY

OF

PREACHING.

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THE INEFFICACY of PREACHING;

OR,

Government the beſt Inſtructor.

BEING

An Attempt to prove, on the Teſtimony of paſt Ages, and the Experience of the preſent, how little either Poets, Hiſtorians, Philoſophers, or Divines, have ever contributed to the Reformation of Mankind.

To which is ſubjoined,

A ſhort PLAN, offered to the Conſideration of Legiſlators, for the more effectual Suppreſſion of Vice, and Encouragement of Virtue.

Tranſlated from the Original of a celebrated French Author.

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M DCC LXXI.

22

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

To the READER.

TO vary the title which an Author has thought proper to diſtinguiſh his performance by, may poſſibly be deemed too great a liberty for a Tranſlator to take; but as a literal verſion of *La Predication*, which is affixed to the French original, ſeems rather to promiſe a diſſertation on pulpit eloquence, or a cenſure on the modern art of preaching, than to convey a complete idea of this work, it is hoped the charge of vanity, or preſumption, will not be incurred by ſubſtituting a name

that

that appears more fully to aſcertain the ſcope of it.

The Tranſlator received this book from a friend at Paris, upon its firſt publication in the year 1766, and with it a teſtimony of the great applauſe it met with there.

A peruſal of it, indeed, in his opinion, juſtified the warm commendation that attended it, and from that moment he wiſhed to ſee it in an Engliſh dreſs, not doubting but that among the innumerable volumes of novels and romances yearly imported from France, it would have found its way hither, and met at leaſt with an equal reception.—

Diſ-

Diſappointed hitherto in the expectation, not only of ſeeing it in a tranſlation, but even of finding the original much known in England, he determined, after an interval of near four years, to venture on that taſk himſelf, and now offers it to the public, with this plea, that though he be not elegant he flatters himſelf he has been faithful.

The ſtyle of the original ſeems to ſpeak the Author leſs attentive to the elegance of language, than to the juſtneſs of ſentiment, and the welfare of ſociety. He appears to be a man of ſound judgment, extenſive reading, and a benevolent diſpoſition; a friend to virtue

virtue and mankind; and, however little the probability may be of seeing his plan adopted by legislatures for the reformation of communities, he has done all that a private citizen can, and may at least console himself with this reflection, that *de Republicâ benè meretur*.

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THE INEFFICACY OF PREACHING, &c.

FROM the first formation of mankind into great communities, Preaching had its origin. Let us trace the success of so early and universal a practice. Moses, to whom we are indebted for a short abridgement of what passed before the deluge, points out to us the Preachers of the first age.

After Cain, with hands imbrued in his brother's blood, had built Enochia, the first

city of the world, and peopled it with inhabitants as degenerate as himſelf; the virtuous deſcendants of Seth multiplied alſo in the innocence of rural life, and bewailed the iniquity of their brethren. Enos, who came to regulate the public worſhip, preached to that perverſe race, but preached in vain. Enoch, in the proceſs of time, conceived better hopes: he ſpared neither remonſtrances or menaces; but how fruitleſs was his zeal! The parting look he gave the Cainites, when he was taken up into heaven, was a mixture of ſorrow and deſpair.

The evil that followed is ſtill more amazing. The ſons of God, who grieved for the ſons of men, could not however withhold their admiration from the cities they had built, or the arts they had invented: they took too near a view of their induſtrious re-

ſearches, their conveniencies of life, the elegancies of their riſing luxury, the freedom of their voluptuouſneſs, and the daughters of the wicked, ſuperior in beauty to the daughters of the righteous: caught by their charms they ſought them in marriage, and with them eſpouſed their vices; ſo that, in ſhort, the ſons of God who preached to the ſons of men became, by degrees, as profligate as their hearers. What contributed to increaſe this diſorder, was the birth of giants, the offſpring of thoſe illicit marriages, monſters, born for the moſt flagitious exceſſes, which the common race of men lamented that they could not imitate. "All fleſh had corrupted "its way, ſays the ſacred Hiſtorian; the "earth was covered with abominations, and "the eyes of God could behold nothing but "iniquity."

It was then that the patriarch Noah began his preaching, which continued 120 years, and the repreſentation of the laſt twenty ought to have added weight to his inſtruction. The pulpit from whence he ſpoke, from whence he thundered, was an ark, which announced the ſubmiſſion of mankind. Mankind permitted him to preach on, and were drowned.

Whoever had read nothing beyond this terrible æra of the world, might conclude, that if ever the earth was repeopled, and fell again into corruption, the remembrance of the deluge would render preaching more efficacious. Noah muſt have addreſſed the people to this purport: Do you behold, wretched mortals, and obſerve upon this earth which you pollute with your crimes, the recent marks of God's indignation; theſe gulphs ſtill yawning o'er the wide

abyſs; theſe rains unknown before the deluge, when the cataracts of heaven remained unopened; theſe torrents which have furrowed the earth, and ſunk the precipices around you; theſe mountains that the floods overtopt; theſe wrecks of the ark which preſerved me and my family to give exiſtence to you; theſe bones ſcattered about your fields, the impure remains of impenitent ſinners, whom the Lord has puniſhed; and dare you imitate their crimes?

Such, and ſtill more pathetic muſt have been the exhortations of Noah; but what benefit reſulted from them? Moſes informs us. The patriarch ſurvived the renewal of the world 350 years, and ſaw his grandchildren. Nimrod and Aſſur founded the empires of Babylon and Nineveh. Unhappy even in the fruitfulneſs of his loins, he left, at his de-

ceaſe, the world as corrupt as it was when the breath of God exterminated its inhabitants.

This corruption gave birth to new crimes in the days of Abraham. The names of Sodom and Gomorrah will be ever mentioned with horror; and yet Abraham exerted his utmoſt zeal to perſuade the guilty citizens to avert that ſhower of fire which at length deſtroyed them.

It does not appear that preaching did more ſervice to private families than to the public. Jacob, whoſe twelve ſons were deſtined to be the fathers of the choſen people, the heads of the twelve tribes of Iſrael, inſtructed them undoubtedly both by precept and example; yet in ſpite of his exhortation, Juda committed inceſt with Thamar his daughter-in-law;

Ruben

Ruben defiled his father's bed; and Joſeph was ſold by his brethren, who thought they ſhewed him favour in ſparing his life.

I am at a loſs to diſcover from whence the poets, who were the firſt theologians of ſo many nations, drew their golden age. If it was a golden age, innocence muſt have been the baſis of it, and preaching would then be needleſs; but perhaps it is its fate to be uſeleſs in every ſtate of human nature. Thoſe tender and humane minds that retrace the original purity of the golden age, reproach men of the iron age with the deſtruction of animals which ſerve both to feed and cloath them. The tyger, that tears in pieces the ox, did not ſubſiſt by his labour; the wolf, that devours the ſheep, never drank of its milk, nor was warmed by its fleece. Man is become the lion of the field, the devourer

of all animated nature; and would to God there was no room, with the philoſopher of Samos, to lay any other exceſſes to his charge! He not only dare drink the blood of animals, his benefactors, but he laughs at the calamities of his own ſpecies, and ſports in their deſtruction. It is well enough known that the æra of the iron age began with Cain.

When the prophetic age arrived, preaching aſſumed a tone adapted to the increaſing diſorders of the times; and Jeremiah, witneſs to the cruelty, injuſtice, ſacrilege, impiety, and abominations, which infected the throne, the ſanctuary, and people of all degrees, raiſed his inſpired voice, arraigning kings, prieſts, and plebeians, with eloquence, ſeverity, and equal freedom; and during four reigns employed, by turns, every power of perſuaſion

perſuaſion and terror. Did he make proſe-lytes? Let us hear his own declaration. "O Lord, Thou has deceived me, and I was "deceived; Thou art ſtronger than I, and "has prevailed; I am in deriſion daily, every "one mocketh me. For ſince I ſpake, I "cried out, I cried, violence and ſpoil: be-"cauſe the word of the Lord was made a "reproach unto me, and a deriſion daily; "but I will ſpeak to them no more in the "name of the Lord, let me ſee Thy ven-"geance on them."

All the prophets that preached from Jeremiah to the forerunner of the Meſſiah, might make, and have made, the ſame complaints. It is not for us worms of the earth, children of darkneſs, blind on the book of life, to aſk, Why the Light of the World, the Word incarnate, did not purify the earth by the

the fire of his doctrine? Why, after his death, the Gentiles and Jews continued what they were before. We know that he ſent the apoſtles to preach to all nations; but we know likewiſe that the nations, inſtead of hearkening to them, put them and their immediate ſucceſſors to death; ſome upon the croſs, others by fire and ſword; and that, until the days of Conſtantine *, few converts were made by preaching.

We muſt here diſtinguiſh between the converſion of the underſtanding and that of the heart; between the eſtabliſhment of a new mode of worſhip, and the eſtabliſhment of manners. This remark is of importance with reſpect to the ſcope of this diſcourſe, and I ſhall have occaſion to refer to it.

* Conſtantine was the firſt Chriſtian emperor of Rome.

Con-

Conſtantine, being well diſpoſed, and aſſiſted by the preachers, ſpread Chriſtianity over thoſe extenſive countries that were under the dominion of the Roman empire. Clovis* introduced it into Gaul, Charlemagne into Germany, Hermenigrelte into Spain, Micoiſlaw into Poland, the emperor Baſil into Ruſſia, and Ethelbert into Great Britain.—A fine triumph for the eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians. Methinks I hear Gregory of Tours exclaim: "Caſt thine eyes over Gaul, "and obſerve in the temples on every ſide

* Clovis was king of the Franks in the year 481, who, being converted from idolatry by his wife Clotilde, is ſaid to have received ſome miraculous favours; ſuch as the ſacred ampulla, or holy oil, which was brought at his baptiſm by a dove; and the crown, interſperſed with flowers of the lily, and flames of gold (fleurs de lys, et l'oriflamme, la banniere de St. Denys) with many others.

"erected

"erected to the true God, thoſe altars, that "croſs, that ſacrifice, thoſe ſacraments, thoſe "public prayers, thoſe humiliations, thoſe "marks of penitence, that hierarchy of paſ-"tors to preſerve the ſacred depoſition of the "faith."

I perceive them very plainly, but at the ſame time I ſee kings and queens with croſſes on their foreheads, and crimes in their hearts. I obſerve a Clovis, with a croſs on his forehead, ſhedding the blood of five princes his relations, to get poſſeſſion of their inconſiderable territories; I ſee a Thierry * with a croſs on his forehead, precipitate king Hermanfroy from the top of a tower, after de-

* Thierry, or Theodoric, king of the Franks, who invited Hermanfroy, king of Thuringia, to his court.

priving

priving him of his kingdom; a Clodimir *, with a croſs on his forehead, ordering the king of Burgundy to be murdered in priſon; a Clotaire †, with a croſs on his forehead, after having obtained a victory over his ſon, commanding him and his family to be burned in a cottage, from whence they implored his mercy; a Fredegonde ‡, a Brunchaut §, with croſſes on their foreheads, the ſcandal of their

* Clodimir, king of Orleans and Bourges; Gregory of Tours, and Aimon, relate of him, that he threw the whole family of Burgundy into a well.

† Clotaire, ſon of Clovis, on his death-bed, dying with a fever, ſaid, What think you of the God of heaven that thus puts to death ſuch great kings of the earth?

‡ Fredegonde, wife of Chilperic, king of Soiſſons, infamous for her lewdneſs, cruelties, and treaſons.

§ Brunchaut, wife of Sigibert, king of France, a monſter of ambition and barbarity.

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own ſex, and the execration of ours. At the ſame time I ſee barbarous laws ſupercede thoſe of the Romans; I ſee the honour of women, and the lives of men, ſet at a price in money; puniſhments commuted, and every poſſible crime fixed at a compoſition. Every thing under the yoke of the victorious and converted Franks makes reflection ſhudder; nothing but oppreſſion, devaſtation, miſery, and rapine. Did not then this religion, ſo pure and holy, preach unſucceſsfully? Things were not better in other places. People changed their religion, but not their manners; and vices and crimes ſtill continued the topics of hiſtory.

Since the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, preaching has prodigiouſly increaſed with the number of the faithful, particularly towards the eleventh century. Till that period none but biſhops

biſhops and paſtors diſtributed the word of life. The numerous offspring of St. Dominic *, St. Francis, and St. Bernard, then aſcended, and kept poſſeſſion of the pulpits. Long after them the diſciples of St. Ignatius † aſpired at and became univerſal preachers; and this zeal, far from diminiſhing in our days, ſeems ſtill to gain ground. At a certain hour, in a ſtated day of the week, fifty thouſand preachers, in different parts of Europe, aſſemble the people, and harangue them upon whatever topics they pleaſe; and to theſe inſtructors ſovereigns truſt the momentous concern of manners. It is obſervable, that among the Romans the

* St. Dominic, St. Francis, and St. Bernard, founders of monaſtic orders called after their own names.

† St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the order of Jeſus, or Jeſuits.

magiſtrate

magiſtrate alone ſpoke to the people *jure regali*. In the reign of Conſtantine the magiſtrate was ſilent, and the prieſt ſpoke. Let him ſpeak. But by the way I muſt remark, that if preaching could form manners, it would not be by entruſting it promiſcuouſly to every one that offers. That young monk had much better purſue his ſtudies in the obſcurity of a cloiſter, than appear in the public character of a preacher. Many qualities are requiſite in an orator, eſpecially of the ſacred order, to engage the underſtanding, and win the heart. Age and gravity are far from being ſuperfluous. If preaching could inculcate virtues, it would not be under that ſoft and ſymmetrical form it wears at this time. Elegant preacher! your methodical exordium, your formal prayer, that interrupts my attention, your motion meaſured by diviſions and ſubdiviſions, your elaborate and florid

florid ſtyle, neither ſurpriſe my underſtanding, nor warm my imagination; much leſs do they ſubdue and correct my heart. It is ſtill worſe if, before the altar, where God and virtue alone ſhould be reverenced, you pay homage to the prince, or the prelate, whoſe favour you ſolicit. I prefer that apoſtle of the people, that blunt miſſionary, who hurls the darts of terror, and rouſes ſinners by the thunder of the Goſpel. Would you have a model? Hear St. Paul preaching, without the aid of method, or tincture of art, to the ſenſible and enlightened Areopagites.

"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all "things ye are too ſuperſtitious: for as I "paſſed by, and beheld your devotions, I "found an altar with this inſcription, *To the* "*unknown God.* Whom therefore ye igno-

" rantly worſhip, Him declare I unto you.
" God that made the world, and all things
" therein, ſeeing that He is Lord of heaven
" and earth, dwelleth not in temples made
" with hands, neither is worſhipped with
" men's hands, as though He needed any
" thing, ſeeing He giveth to all life and
" breath, and all things; and hath made of
" one blood all nations, that they ſhould
" ſeek the Lord, if haply they ſhould ſeek
" after Him, and find Him, though He be
" not far from every one of us; for in Him
" we live, and move, and have our being;
" as certain alſo of your own poets have
" ſaid, for we are alſo his offspring. For-
" aſmuch then as we are the offspring of
" God, we ought not to think that the God-
" head is like unto gold or ſilver, or ſtone
" graven by art and men's device: and the
" times of this ignorance God winked at;

" but

" but now commandeth all men every where
" to repent."

With an eloquence ſimple, nervous, and ſublime like this, Demoſthenes harangued the inhabitants of the ſame city, when he wanted to perſuade them to take up arms againſt Philip. " Behold, Athenians, to
" what ſtreights you are reduced, and to
" what a height of inſolence this man is ar-
" rived. He does not leave you the choice
" of action, or repoſe; he menaces; he aſ-
" ſumes a proud and haughty tone; and,
" while you temporize, and continue quiet,
" he hems you in on every ſide. Will you
" for ever ſpend your time in loitering about
" the ſtreets, and aſking one another, What
" news of Philip? One enquires if he be dead;
" No, replies another, he is only ſick. But
" whether dead or ſick, what does it con-

" cern you? For, if he did not exiſt, your " own ill conduct would ſoon raiſe up ano- " ther Philip."

Demoſthenes obtained what he wiſhed from the Athenians. St. Paul obtained nothing. Their misfortunes induced them to change their political behaviour; but to repent, and reform their manners, was a language they did not underſtand.

Such has been the fate of Preaching for ſo many ages through the whole Chriſtian world: nor did the laſt century improve it, even in France, where it then appeared to ſo great advantage. Whilſt Bourdalone *, treading in the ſteps of Boſſuet †, was en-

* Bourdalone, a celebrated preacher in France.

† Boſſuet, biſhop of Meaux in France, a very learned man and famous preacher.

deavouring

deavouring to alarm ſinners by the arms of reaſon and of faith, the government was obliged to erect courts of juſtice unknown to preceding ages: one againſt the plunderers of the ſtate, called *Farmers of the Revenue*; another againſt *Poiſoning*. Biſhop Maſſillon, purſuing a different road from Bourdalone and Boſſuet, addreſſed himſelf to the heart. All he gained was admiration.

How diſagreeable ſo ever it be, it muſt be acknowledged, that the pulpit is not the place of converſion. The Italians, Spaniards, and Polanders, are more preached to than we are, and yet are no better than us: even the preachers themſelves are ſcarce converted by their own doctrine. If a preacher thought that his auditors would be as corrupt at the concluſion, as they were at the beginning of his ſermon, what would he do? To

ſhew his talents he muſt continue to harangue. If you ſay that ſome perverſe ones may be reclaimed: How many will you allow? They cannot exceed the number of the elect: a number, according to the oracles of the pulpit, ſo ſmall, that the moſt upright have cauſe to tremble. But the reformation, which is of importance to ſtates, muſt be general; the body of the people muſt be moral.

To diſcover the utility of preaching in other religions, let us go back to the ages we have juſt left. While Judaiſm unſucceſsfully exhorted the children of Abraham, the prieſts of other religions, the Oſirites in Egypt, the Magi in Perſia, the Gymnoſophiſts in India, the Exegotes in Greece, the Flamines in Italy, the Druids in Gaul: in ſhort, the miniſters of every altar over the whole

whole known globe, were animated with the ſame zeal; and there is no reaſon to believe that they had better ſucceſs than the Prophets and the Levites. I ſhall not ſtay to prove that the Mahometan preachers in Aſia, Africa, and Europe, can hardly be ſuppoſed to produce more fruit than ours.

In ſpeaking of the ſucceſs which Preaching always aims at, I obſerved, that a diſtinction ſhould be made between the eſtabliſhment of a mode of worſhip, and an eſtabliſhment of manners.

Supreme authority can erect an altar, but it cannot convey a virtue. I ſhould be glad to know by what fatality it has happened, that Preaching has produced, in every religion, more harm than good. Let us confine ourſelves to our own. The Cruſades,

where a hundred princes ruined their eſtates. The dreadful wars of the Albigenſes *; the maſſacres † of the League; and ſo many other phrenſies too well known, were all ſtirred up and fomented by Preaching. If authentic hiſtory ‡ did not atteſt it, who would believe

* The Albigenſes were a ſect of Religious in Languedoc, whom Philip Auguſtus, and Louis the 8th, kings of France, at the inſtigation of pope Innocent the 3d, cruelly perſecuted and treated.

† The maſſacre of the League, or of St. Bartholomew, as on that day the Proteſtants were murdered by order of Catherine de Medicis and Charles the 9th, at Paris, and through almoſt the whole kingdom of France. "An execrable action, ſays one of their own countrymen, ſuch "as never had, and God grant it never may have "its like."

‡ I know not from what Engliſh hiſtorian the author has borrowed that relation.—In the time of Henry the 1ſt, indeed, the deteſtable crime of ſodomy

believe that in the reign of Henry I. king of England, preachers made long hair and ſodomy equally criminal: an abſurdity that might expoſe many innocent perſons to the fury of a mob. What pity it is, that mankind cannot be perſuaded, with equal ſucceſs, to cultivate thoſe ſocial virtues which would unite into one family the whole human ſpecies!

But ever ſince time and vice have kept pace with each other, there have been preachers of another ſort, who without call, or attachment to the altars, have recommended good morals. Let us ſee if they have ſucceeded better. I ſpeak here of poets,

ſodomy was too prevalent; and a vice of ſuch a nature, practiſed with impunity, might have occaſioned the remark that long hair was inveighed againſt in the pulpit as equally criminal.

the

the firſt teachers of mankind, and the moſt likely to gain attention, as they always aſſume a divine language, *os divina ſonans.* Nothing now remains of the works of Orpheus, who ſang his moral tale before the days of the Prophets. But if fabulous hiſtory, to raiſe our ideas of him, tells us, that he tamed the moſt ſavage beaſts, and even ſoftened ſtern Pluto; at the ſame time it informs us, that he could not ſubdue the amorous rage of the Thracian women, who tore him in pieces for his inſenſibility: unlucky prognoſtic for thoſe poets his ſucceſſors, who ſhould preach up virtue.

Among thoſe with whoſe works we are acquainted, ſome, as Homer, Virgil, Lucan, Taſſo, Camoens, Milton, and the author of the Henriade, have preached in heroic ſtrains. At the time when the Iliad made its appear-

nce, Greece was divided into as many factions as ſhe contained ſtates. Continual invaſions, piracies, and inteſtine convulſions, then ſhook the general conſtitution. Homer foreſaw the fatal conſequences reſulting from theſe diviſions, and applied a moral tale; a proper remedy for ſo great an evil. He employed the voice of reaſon, the force of example, the majeſty of ſtyle, the pomp of words, and the charms of poetry, to point out the dangers of diſcord: but union was not reſtored. The Iliad perhaps was never more read, or better reliſhed, than in the time of Pericles; becauſe at that period the genius and taſte of the Grecians were arrived at the higheſt pitch: even the vulgar felt the beauties of poetry and eloquence. I ſhall not ſpend time in quoting a hundred paſſages where Homer, always intent upon his deſign, paints diſcord under the form of a famiſhed monſter, that

is

is ſatisfied only with the miſery, tears, lamentations, and blood of the people. Let it ſuffice to know, that while the Greeks ſang Homer's verſes, and raiſed his poetry and morality to the ſkies, they were tearing one another in pieces. Corcyra was at variance with Corinth; Thebes in arms againſt Athens; Megara againſt Sparta: but, above all, Athens and Sparta vowing eternal hatred to each other, drew the other Grecian ſtates into their quarrel. Let it ſuffice to know, that the Iliad, though ſoon tranſlated and admired in Egypt, Perſia, and the Indies, never gave birth to concord there.

The wiſe Virgil, whilſt he flattered the Romans in his Æneid *, meant, undoubtedly, to revive expiring virtue in their breaſts. To this end he celebrates a hero, ever juſt, pa-

* 6th Æneid.

tient,

tient, brave, and pious towards the gods. *Pius Æneas* is his diſtinguiſhing character; and, to inſpire the greater horror of profaneneſs, and other vices that were haſtening the fall of Rome, even under her own triumphal arches, [1] with how tremendous a deſcription does he open the infernal regions to their ſight? In this abyſs of tortures [2], nine times deeper than the diſtance of earth from heaven, he expoſes to the eyes of im-

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[1] *Quæ rapidus flammis ambit torrentibus omnis*
Tartareus Phlegethon, torquetque ſonantia ſaxa.
——— *Horriſono ſtridentes cardine ſacræ*
Panduntur portæ—Cernis, cuſtodia qualis
Veſtibulo ſedeat?
Hinc exaudiri gemitus, et ſæva ſonare
Verbera; tum ſtridor ferri, tractæque catenæ;

[2] The French Author differs in his calculation from Virgil, who ſays only,

——— ——— *Tartarus ipſe*
Bis *patet in præceps tantum, tenditque ſub umbras,*
Quantus ad ætherium terræ ſuſpectus olympum.

pious mortals, [3] misers, who accumulated riches, without ſharing it with their needy friends; [4] knaves, who abuſed the confidence repoſed in them; [5] brothers, who bore irreconcilable enmity to brothers; [6] ſubjects, that rebelled againſt their lawful ſovereigns; [7] traitors, that ſold their country for money; [8] fathers, guilty of inceſt; and [9] children, of parricide; and [10] magiſtrates, who enacted or

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[3] *Aut qui divitiis ſoli incubuêre repertis,*
Nec partem poſuêre ſuis ——

[5] *Hic quibus inviſi fratres, dum vita manebat.*

[9] *Pulſatuſque parens, et* [4] *fraus innexa Clianti.*

[6] —— —— —— *Quique arma ſecuti*
Impia, nec veriti dominorum fallere dextras.

[7] *Vendidit hic auro patriam* ——

[8] *Hic thalamum invaſit natæ.* ——

[10] —— —— *Fixit leges, pretioque refixit.*

abolished

bolished law from views of self-interest. He points out the [11] audacious Titans, who attempted to scale heaven; the [12] proud Salmoneus, who, to make him worshipped, dared imitate the thunder of Jupiter; the insolent Titius, that forced a goddess to a blush. To each crime is allotted a suitable punishment by that tremendous voice, which incessantly cries to the guilty groaning [13] under the lash of the furies.

Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnere Divos.

Learn to do justice, and revere the gods.

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[11] ——— *Titania pubes* ———
Fulmine dejecti, fundo volvuntur in imo.
——— *Qui manibus magnum rescindere cœlum*
Aggressi ———

[12] ——— *Dantem Salmonea pœnas*
Dum flammas Jovis et sonitus imitatur Olympi.

[13] *Continuo sontes ultrix accincta flagello*
Tisiphoni quatit insultans, trivosque sinistrâ
Intentans angues ——
—— *Deûm pœnas docuit Hecaté.*

Were Auguſtus, Tiberius, Caligula, Nero; were the grandees of their court, or that multitude of corrupt wretches, who diſgraced every order of the ſtate, terrified at this picture of Tartarus? Did they change their conduct? Not in the leaſt. Was Virgil himſelf moved with his own deſcription? Three lines in his Georgics give room to doubt it:

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas;
Atque metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum,
Subjecit pedibus, ſtrepitumque Acherontis avari.

"He is happy who, underſtanding the prin-
"ciples of things, ſets himſelf above all
"vain fears, even that of inexorable death,
"and deſpiſes the ſtory of the avaricious
"Acheron *."

At

* The French original, of which this is a literal tranſlation, gives theſe lines a meaning very different

At the time that Lucan wrote his Pharſalia, he Romans ſtill held that fabulous religion hey received from their pontiffs, and believed n auſpices, auguries, dreams, divinations, and oracles. The ſpeech he puts into the mouth of Cato, who would not ſo much as enter

ifferent from what Dryden aſſigns them. Such conſtruction charges that great poet with trange inconſiſtency, who is thereby made to vow a creed quite oppoſite to what he ſeems to dopt in his Æneid, where he labours to reform his countrymen, by painting, in the ſtrongeſt colours, the miſerable conſequences of vice, by telling them, in his Georgics, that the picture he had drawn of future puniſhments, was, in his opinion, a mere chimera. Our own poet, more agreeable to the ſpirit of the Latin author, tranſlates the paſſage thus:

Happy the man, who ſtudying nature's laws,
Thro' known effects can trace the ſecret cauſe:
His mind poſſeſſing in a quiet ſtate,
Fearleſs of fortune, and reſign'd to fate.

the temple of Jupiter Ammon, whom all the world went to conſult, is ſo ſtrong and energetic, as might well have undeceived the Romans, and removed their ancient prejudices.

Where would thy fond, thy vain enquiry, go?
What myſtic fate, what ſecret wouldſt thou know?
Is it a doubt, if death ſhould be my doom,
Rather than live, till kings and bondage come;
Rather than ſee a tyrant crown'd at Rome?
Or wouldſt thou know, if what we value here,
Life, be a trifle hardly worth our care?
What by old age and length of days we gain,
More than to lengthen out the ſenſe of pain?
Or if this world, with all its forces join'd,
The univerſal malice of mankind
Can ſhake or hurt the brave and honeſt mind?

If

If ſtable virtue can her ground maintain,
While fortune feebly threats, and frowns in vain?
If truth and juſtice with uprightneſs dwell,
And honeſty conſiſts in meaning well?
If right be independent of ſucceſs,
And conqueſt cannot make it more or leſs?
Are theſe, my friend, the ſecrets thou would'ſt know,
Thoſe doubts for which to oracles we go?
'Tis known; 'tis plain; 'tis all already told;
And horned Ammon can no more unfold.
From God deriv'd, to God by nature join'd,
We act the dictates of his mighty mind:
And tho' the prieſts are mute, and temples ſtill,
God never wants a voice to ſpeak his will.
When firſt we from the teeming womb were brought,
With in-born precepts, then our ſouls were fraught,
And then the Maker his new creatures taught:

Then when he form'd, and gave us to be men,
He gave us all our uſeful knowledge then.
Canſt thou believe, the vaſt eternal Mind
Was e'er to Syrts and Lybian ſands confin'd?
That He wou'd chuſe this waſte, this barren ground,
To teach the thin inhabitants around,
And leave his truth in wilds and deſerts drown'd?
Is there a place, that God would chuſe to love
Beyond this earth, the ſea, yon heav'n above,
And virtuous minds, the nobleſt throne for Jove?
Why ſeek we further then? Behold around,
How all thou ſee'ſt, does with the God abound?
Jove is alike in all, and always to be found.
Let thoſe weak minds, who live in doubt and fear,
To juggling prieſts for oracles repair;
One certain hour of death to each decreed,
My fixt, my certain ſoul from doubt has freed.

The coward, and the brave, are doom'd to fall;
And when Jove told this truth, he told us all.
So ſpoke the hero; and, to keep his word,
Nor Ammon, nor his oracles, explor'd;
But left the crowd at freedom to believe,
And take ſuch anſwers, as the prieſt ſhould give *.

ROWE's Tranſlation.

Go on, Lucan; and, if poſſible, harangue with ſtill greater energy; but the prieſts, the emperor, the ſenate and people, will continue to ſeek the events of futurity in the entrails of beaſts, or from oracles; and under theſe omens Rome will again ſpread the

* The ſpirit of this celebrated paſſage in the Latin author is ſo much better preſerved in the above tranſlation by one of our own poets, than in that of Brebeuf, which the French original quotes, that the tranſlator has ſubſtituted it for the latter.

horrors of war in thoſe countries which are ſo unfortunate as to be known to her.

I ſhall ſay but a word of * Camoens; the models which he celebrates in Vaſco de Gama, and his companions, thoſe heroes of Chriſtianity, of commerce, and humanity; did they prevent the Spaniards from being barbarous and cruel in America, where their avaricious hands planted the croſs, to nail to it every one that would not deliver up his gold?

I paſs over the preaching of † Taſſo, as

* Camoens wrote the Luſiadas, or conqueſt of the Indies by the Portugueſe—a juſtly celebrated poem; but the author lived poor, and died neglected.

† Torquato Taſſo, an illuſtrious poet of Italy in the 16th century, author of many poems, particularly of GERUSALEMNE LIBERATA, which gained him great reputation.

his

his heroes are, in the eye of reaſon, nothing better than a band of robbers, diſtinguiſhed with a white croſs; who ſold their own, in order to invade the property of infidels; who abandoned their own wives, to violate the chaſtity of thoſe of others; who, reeking with blood and ready for new maſſacres, ſmote their breaſts over the ſepulchre of the God of peace. Taſſo had the leſs reaſon to hope for promoting virtue by his poem, as, at the period it was written, cruſades were no longer conſidered but as what they really were. A great deal might be ſaid upon the Henriade *; what a ſermon! Is there a moral virtue, a virtue real, or beneficial to ſociety, that is not there ſet off in the moſt conſpicuous point of light?

* The Henriade, a poem of Voltaire's; the hero of which is Henry IV. of France.

Fortitude, juſtice, humanity, generoſity, obedience to the laws, and fidelity to the prince, are there brought into action, under forms the moſt beautiful and affecting. The ſame pencil, with no leſs truth and power, paints, in the moſt frightful colours, the follies that ruined our anceſtors; and, among others, that wild fanaticiſm, that blind and ſtupid fury, which reaſon can never reſtrain.

From thoſe dark realms the worſt of tyrants came,
Fanatic demon is his horrid name;
Religion's ſon, but rebel in her cauſe,
He tears her boſom, and diſdains her laws.
'Twas him, that guided Ammon's frantic race,
Where ſilver Arnon winds his liquid maze;
When weeping mothers, with mad zeal poſſeſt,
Slew their fond infants clinging to their breaſts;

Thro'

Thro' him raſh Jephtha vow'd; the fiend imbru'd
The father's dagger in the daughter's blood.
By him the impious Chalchas was inſpir'd,
And tender Iphigenia's death requir'd.
Thy foreſts, France, the cruel power approv'd,
There ſmok'd the incenſe which Teutates lov'd:
Thy ſhades have ſeen the human victim bleed,
Whilſt hoary Druids authoriz'd the deed.
From Rome's great capital he gave the word,
When Chriſtians ſhudder'd at the pagans ſword:
When Rome ſubmitted to the Son of God,
High o'er the church he wav'd his iron rod;
Chriſtians, once doom'd to feel the tort'ring flame,
Were deaf to mercy, and unmov'd by ſhame.

SMOLLET'S Tranſlation.

This poem has been preaching to us theſe forty years; has it made any impreſſion? Our theological diſputes, which are ſtill main-

maintained with as much acrimony as ever; the cries for war, which are ſhouted forth to arm the father of the nation againſt his children; a recent tranſaction in a great city *, where public clamour diverted the attention of the magiſtrates, and brought an innocent old † man to the wheel; and the anniverſary of blood celebrated in the ſame city by an act of thankſgiving for a religious maſſacre: all theſe ſufficiently prove, that fanaticiſm ſtill reigns among us, and that this monſter would again commit great devaſtation, if

* Thoulouſe.

† Calas, a proteſtant, condemned to the wheel by the magiſtrates of Thoulouſe, for the ſuppoſed murder of his ſon, who became a Catholic.

The ſame province furniſhed another inſtance of this bigotry, by hanging the whole family of Serven, who were proteſtants, on a falſe charge of drowning their daughter, who had loſt her ſenſes.

not

not chained down by the wiſdom of government.

But of all the epic poets, Milton has choſen the ſublimeſt ſubject, and the moſt proper for a preacher. His plan is immenſe! It comprehends the councils of the Almighty, and the whole creation; thoſe torrents of light and pleaſure which flowed for the angels, while they continued faithful; that ſea of fire, wherein their rebellion plunged them; their malice againſt man, innocent and happy in the garden of Eden. It deſcribes their attempts to ruin him, and their fatal ſucceſs; the dreadful effects of his tranſgreſſion; the air overſpread with thick clouds; winds let looſe; ſtorms raging; tempeſts heaving up the ſea; volcanos burſting into flame; the earth withholding her fruits; war preparing her ſcourges; force overruling all; tyranny advancing

advancing to its throne; famine menacing; diſeaſes deſtroying; and death, which terminates not this ſcene of univerſal miſery; heaven ſhut, and hell opening for unhappy mortals, who ſhall be born only to ſuffer; and to ſuffer, becauſe ſpringing from a guilty father.

But I injure Milton: his poem, from the invocation to the end, is a ſublime and affecting ſermon; a diſcourſe of the Almighty in a language of fire; a ſacred enthuſiaſm. The Engliſh began to read it in the reign of Charles the ſecond; and it was preciſely at this period, that the allurements of riches, luxury, and debauchery, made England more than ever forget the fall and puniſhment of man.

But not one nation alone is intereſted in the ſubject of this poem; the concern is univerſal,

verſal, on a point the moſt important. Accordingly all Europe reads Paradiſe Loſt. It ſtrikes, and aſtoniſhes; but does it work reformation? not in the leaſt.—Other poets have imagined, that morals brought into action would operate with greater force, than a bare recital: and certainly to read, and ſee, are two very different things. Theatrical repreſentations make their way through every ſenſe, and reach the ſoul. Greece, in erecting theatres, endeavoured to form virtuous citizens even by amuſements. This was the province of tragedy: Æſchylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, ſtudied the two moſt powerful ſprings of the human heart, terror, and pity; and theſe they put in motion with that grandeur and ſimplicity, which nature unfolds to thoſe geniuſes that ſeduloufly conſult her. They terrified, and drew tears; but it did not appear that the laws

were

were better obſerved, ſocial virtue more practiſed, juſtice more reſpected, faith better kept: for even at this time the Athenians pillaged the public fund of all the Grecian ſtates, that ſacred depoſit * in the temple of Delphos, which they appropriated to their own ſplendor and luxury. In one of theſe theatres it was, that the poiſon was prepared for the deſtruction of Socrates. The pathetic Euripides interwove his tragedy with the morality of that excellent man, and painted mankind in their true colours; yet left them in the ſame condition. The ſublime Sophocles, ſtiled by Cicero, The Divine Poet, in pointing out what mankind ought to be, could not form them of that precious

* The Temple of Delphos was deſpoiled of its immenſe treaſure, during the Phocian war by Philomelus the Phocian general, aſſiſted by Athens and Sparta.

material. The vehement and paſſionate Æſchylus, at the repreſentation of his Eumenides, frightened children, and made women miſcarry; but this tranſient power, exerciſed over the ſenſes, had no influence upon their manners; and the women, whom fear had ſo affected, became neither more chaſte, or more attentive to the duty of mothers.—I make no remarks on the effect of tragedy among the Romans; the declamations of Seneca, honoured with the name of tragedy, were not calculated to rouſe and change the heart.—Let us turn our enquiry towards modern nations, where, after a long ſlumber, tragedy is revived in all its powers. Every nation boaſts of maſter-pieces. Spain extols her Lopez de Voga, and Guillen de Caſtro; England, her Shakeſpear, Otway, Dryden, and Addiſon; France, her Corneille, Racine, and Crebillon. The ſuperiority

riority is disputed among them; but it would be more to the purpose, if they could produce instances where tragedy had extirpated vices, and introduced virtues. France has one advantage which might be expected to answer this end, viz. That the * author of Mérope, Alzira, and the Orphan of China, has woven philosophy into the tragic scene, which, without lowering the spirit, has rendered it more instructive and more moral. But what follows? A spectator, who melted into tears over a hero sacrificing life to his duty, violates his own the same day, by plunging into riot and disorder. Oh you, who, from an enthusiastic sensibility, lament the fate of those generous citizens that devoted their lives at the siege of

* Voltaire.

Calais!

Calais * ! ſo great a ſacrifice is not expected from you; preſerve but from famine thoſe miſerable peaſants, who periſh at the plough for your ſupport: it is all that is required of you. Ancient tragedy was conſidered as a religious act; and people were obliged to purify themſelves before admiſſion to it: ſome rigid Athenians even taught, that it was better to abſtain, than to come with bad diſpoſitions. They did their utmoſt to render it uſeful to public manners.—Comedy likewiſe had the laudable ambition of reforming

* John de Vienne defended Calais againſt Edward III. of England: after a long ſiege it ſurrendered. Edward demanded ſix of their principal burghers to be delivered up to him for puniſhment. Euſtace de St. Pierre, and five others, his fellow citizens, offered themſelves to ſuffer death; but, by the earneſt interceſſion of Edward's queen, they were pardoned.—There is a French tragedy on this ſubject, here alluded to.

mankind. Ariſtophanes, Menander, Plautus, Terence, Wycherley, Congreve, Moliere, and Regnard, employed the poignant ſalt of raillery, and thereby anſwered the end of good comedy, which is nothing more than a ſpeaking picture of what is ridiculous in a nation. Admit that a nation ſhall not be ridiculous; but will it then be virtuous? It is neither the *Femmes Scavantes* *, nor the *Precieuſes Ridicules* *, that does hurt; but it is thoſe ſhameleſs women, who, by their rank and libertine life, teach their ſex to look upon modeſty as baſe and vulgar. It is thoſe ſplendid proſtitutes, who might perhaps be pardoned the ruin of fortunes, if they did not deſtroy all principles too. It is thoſe mothers, who are ſtrangers in their own families; thoſe ſtepmothers, who per-

* French comedies.

ſuade

ſuade a father to neglect, and diſinherit his firſt children; thoſe women of intrigue, who, making traffic of their charms, raiſe vice and ignorance to the higheſt ſtations, to the ruin of all decency and order. What have we to fear from *George Dandin*, *les Malades imaginaires*, *les Miſanthropes*, *les Tuteurs jaloux*, *l'Ecole des Femmes*, and *l'Ecole des Maris* *? But our danger ariſes from fraud, cruelty, injuſtice, oppreſſion, violence, perfidy, and fanaticiſm: men infected with theſe vices, are the peſts that ought to be driven out of ſociety.

It has been ſaid by ſome, that a play is an experiment made upon the human heart. If it be ſo, it reſembles many others that have been unſucceſsfully tried. The preſent age,

* French comedies.

which buſies itſelf in queſt of amuſement, like perſons, who, abounding in every thing, torment themſelves to regain a loſt appetite; this age, I ſay, has produced a new ſpecies, called *Weeping Comedy*, which, by exciting tenderneſs and compaſſion, ſeems to have ſome connection with manners. One part of the public applauds, while another treats this moral drama as a tireſome ſermon; and had rather laugh with Moliere, than cry with La Chauſſée. But whether they laugh or cry, manners are not reformed. If the theatre could reform public manners, it is not to be expected from our play houſes, which admit but a few, and none without money; whereas the * magnificent ſpectacles at Athens and ancient Rome were free, and

* This cuſtom of admitting people into the theatres promiſcuouſly, and without money, prevails ſtill in Pruſſia, and ſome German courts.

open to the lower claſs of people, who were accounted an eſſential part of the ſtate. It muſt however be owned, that their being good citizens was not owing to public ſhews. Corneille, at the ſame time that he eſtabliſhed the theatre, maintained, that theatrical inſtruction ought to be the moſt ſalutary, becauſe it was the moſt ſtriking; but the virtues of poſterity have not juſtified this prediction.

It is however very laudable, that men of genius ſhould exert their various talents to communicate to mankind, ſuch portions of virtue and happineſs, as they are capable of, in hopes that ſucceſs will one day crown their endeavours.

What the theatre could not effect, ſatire has attempted. It ſometimes employed irony;

at others, vehemence of ſtyle. Juvenal, thinking irony too feeble, grew indignant, and quitting the pleaſant manner of Horace, attacked vice with a pen dipped in gall. This was a ſermon. Alas, my friend! thou mayeſt rage in verſe, as well as proſe, but thou wilt not prevent the Meſſalinas of the age from being tired before they are ſatisfied; the Locuſtas, from inventing new poiſons; the lawyer Mathon, from accumulating riches by forged wills; M. Regulus, from exerciſing the infamous trade of an informer; the freed-man Criſpin, from corrupting the prince; and the Patricians that die will, as heretofore, go and diſturb the virtuous ſhades of the Camilluſes, the Fabriciuſes, the Scipios, and the Catos. Does this inundation of vice ſpring, as Juvenal imagines, from the Romans no longer dreading the torments

of

of hell? tales not believed even by children, after they had begun to frequent the public baths.

Esse aliquos manes, et subterranea regna,
Et Charon, et Stygio ranas in gurgite nigras,
Atque unâ transire vadum tot millia cymbâ;
Nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum ære lavantur.

Ghosts, Stygian lakes, and frogs with creaking note,
And Charon wafting souls in leaky boat,
Are now thought fables, to fright fools conceiv'd,
Or children, and by children scarce believ'd.

Modern nations, that admit of a hell, are not more moral; and what was said by this satirist to a worthy citizen of Rome, might be applied to a virtuous man in the road of fortune:—

Aude aliquid brevibus gyaris, et carcere dignum,
Si vis esse aliquis.

Wouldst thou to honours, and preferment climb?
Be bold in mischief; dare some mighty crime,
Which dungeons, death, or banishment deserves.
DRYDEN's Translation.

If Boileau could return from the dead, he would applaud his own foresight in guessing what lessons the worshippers of fortune would teach their children.

Let mercy's calls ne'er reach thy deaf'ned ear,
Nor melt thy hard'ned heart; turn savage, Arab;
Be base, perfidious, cruel, and oppressive;
Leave gen'rous acts to fools; and wisely strive
To raise thy fortune on another's ruin.

He would applaud himself; but if he wrote to work a reformation, he would lament to find the

the little effect his inſtruction had produced among us. The general ſucceſs, both of ſatiric and comic poets, is to make men hypocrites. Hypocritical fathers are not perhaps ſo deteſtable as they are often thought; they deceive their children, who, viewing the maſk, may copy what appears to be virtue.—I am not ignorant of what is ſaid about the power of poetry over human nature. That it is a celeſtial fire, which warms and inflames the ſoul; a ſpirit that burns up, and devours; an ardent eloquence, that conveys its ſublime tranſports to the inmoſt receſſes of the heart. There is ſome truth in this repreſentation; but theſe impreſſions vaniſh as quick as the charms of a fine concert.

Draco compoſed a poem of three thouſand verſes, entitled ὑπόθηκαι, wherein he laid down admirable precepts for the conduct of life;

life; but he found something more wanting to root out vice from Athens.

History, less ornamented, more natural and true, than poetry, has always endeavoured to correct manners by facts, and reflections arising from them: Has it attained the end? While it continues to relate the disorders that overspread the earth, it shews the inefficacy of its own efforts. All nations, from Herodotus to our times, have employed themselves in compiling historical annals; few are become the wiser for it: this distinction must therefore be referred to some other cause, which we will try to discover.

If the force of instruction could have introduced good-manners, the glory of it should seem, next to the preaching of the gospel, peculiarly reserved for philosophy. The philosopher,

loſopher, to eſtabliſh morality, borrows neither the gall of ſatire, the enchantment of the theatre, the thunder of eloquence, nor the wonders of inſpiration. He rejects every inſtrument of ſurprize, and adheres to the ſimplicity of reaſon; he opens to us the book of nature, which ſpeaks a language intelligible to every capacity, and ſearches for the ſource of morality in the conſtitution of things; he ſuppoſes nothing, but he proves. Is an action prejudicial to ſociety? it is bad, and he proſcribes it. Is another beneficial? it is good, and he recommends it. In this manner he draws a viſible line, and marks the boundaries between vice and virtue. He lays no reſtraint upon nature; he permits the uſe of all her gifts, but not the abuſe of them; his deſign is not to form a man with-

without paſſions, but a worthy man with paſſions.

Does he ſpeak of God? he carefully avoids painting him as an arbitrary legiſlator, who commands or forbids on no other motive but that of being obeyed: He does not ſay, honour and love your parents, becauſe God commands it; but he ſays, God commands it, becauſe, if you are deaf to this firſt call of nature, whom will you love and reverence? He does not ſay, abſtain from violence, becauſe God forbids it; but he ſays, God forbids it becauſe the practice of it would ſoon render cities and countries a continued ſcene of confuſion, horror, and blood. He teaches us, after Cicero, that law is not a human invention, but the voice of univerſal reaſon, which governs the world, and, like it, is general, eternal, and immutable; that

that it does not vary according to times and places, but what it permitted or prohibited at the beginning of things, it always permits or prohibits to every nation on the globe; and after having defined vice and virtue, far from ſeeing in the Deity an implacable Judge, he diſcovers in him an indulgent Father, who puniſhes only to reclaim.

The philoſopher propoſes nothing beyond the reach of reaſon; and his philoſophy is not of that ſort which introduced into Memphis, Greece, and ancient Rome, auguries, ſacred dreams, divinations, myſteries, prodigies, and the generation of the gods, with their appearances under human forms. To know the religion of philoſophy, liſten to Socrates, Plato, Confucius, Cicero, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Montaigne, Locke, Addiſon, and La Bruyere; there reaſon itſelf diſcourſes with

with you, and appeals directly to your own.

But what effect has this ſublime and pure philoſophy, this torch of reaſon; which, after being extinguiſhed in Greece, was rekindled in Italy, England, France, and diffuſed its light even to the extremities of the North, produced upon manners? It has indeed happily baniſhed ſome barbarous prejudices. Teſtamentary wills, that leave nothing to the Church, are no longer diſannulled; churches no more ſerve for ſanctuaries to aſſaſſins; judicial duels are aboliſhed; and it is no longer believed that Rome can releaſe ſubjects from their oath of allegiance to the prince. We ſhall not again go to ruin our families, and be martyred in the holy land. Sorcerers are no longer brought

to the ſtake; and at the laſt *auto-da-fé* at Liſbon no human ſacrifice was made: and it is worthy obſervation, with regard to the ſame ſcene, that the court, judging differently from the foreign miniſters, did not appear on the occaſion. Theſe perhaps, and ſome other maladies of the mind, foſtered by ignorance, have been cured by philoſophy; but every kind of vice, that can infect enlightened nations, ſtill ſubſiſts, and their poiſon circulating through every condition from the cottage to the palace, grows more powerful in proportion as it aſcends. The Stoic philoſophy, by its utmoſt efforts, produced indeed a few good emperors: Trajan, Nero, Adrian, the two Antonines, Julian, and ſome individuals in every order of the ſtate; but it performed nothing upon the bulk of the people. More enlightened than formerly,

formerly, it labours with the ſame zeal to make proſelytes; but this flower of the human ſpecies will never compoſe more than a very ſmall republic.

The records of time muſt then convince us, that preaching, under whatever form it be viewed, whether in the leſſons of philoſophy, the examples of hiſtory, the enthuſiaſm of poetry, the oracles of the goſpel, the precepts of the ſynagogue, the inſpiration of prophets, the zeal of patriarchs, in the mouth of every preacher of what nation ſoever, never has, nor ever can form a virtuous people. I may be reproached myſelf with being a preacher; it is my diſeaſe: I ſhall perhaps be cured of it.

Who then will be found the true and effectual preacher?—GOVERNMENT:—when this

this ſhall perform its duty, I will anſwer for all the reſt. But this aſſertion is not enough, it muſt be proved.

Two powers flowing from creative energy, called Centripetal and Centrifugal forces, which Kepler had faintly diſcovered, and Newton has demonſtrated, regulate the natural world. It is by theſe powers that all the ſpheres gravitating to each other, attracted towards one common center, and at the ſame time repelled to the circumference of their reſpective orbits, perform uninterrupted revolutions, from whence reſult univerſal order and harmony. Two ſprings, which preaching cannot influence, but which government may direct, might likewiſe arrange the moral world, as far, at leaſt, as regularity is compatible with liberty. Vice

muſt be reſtrained by PUNISHMENT, and virtue enouraged by REWARD.

To puniſh: Noah threatened a corrupted world with a deluge; but thoſe perverſe people did not perceive the cataracts of heaven in the hand of the patriarch. Government is provided with the inſtruments of correction. The prophets of Iſrael announced to the choſen nation barrenneſs, captivity, contempt and miſery, whenever they forſook their God; but while this people ſaw nothing around them but proſperity, they grew hardened in their impiety. Government has power to realize the danger at the very inſtant they defy it. Poets, in their fables, puniſh vice; but a villain finds in hiſtory more inſtances of ſucceſsful crimes, than of rewarded virtues: government may remove this ſcandal at pleaſure. Fly from vice, ſay the

the philoſophers, though it might be practiſed with impunity; fly from it, becauſe it is prejudicial to your fellow-creatures and yourſelves: a motive ſo pure and rational influences very few; the arm of government is felt by all. The preachers of the goſpel, extending their views beyond the limits of the preſent life, menace an eternity of puniſhment; but the conduct of their hearers too plainly proves, that the moſt tremendous objects make a very faint impreſſion, when ſeen at a diſtance, and through an obſcure medium.

To reward: This is the other ſpring that excites to virtue. Philoſophy, which recommends the love of it for its own intrinſic beauty, or for its uſefulneſs to ſociety, never did, and never can gain many diſciples. The

theatre, which crowns it in repreſentation, leaves it to lament in reality. The religions, that have promiſed it happineſs and glory after this life, have always ſpoke to mortals more attached to earth than to heaven, and more affected by things viſible than by things inviſible. The law of Moſes, which promiſed temporal bleſſings, would have made it proſper in Iſrael, had the fatneſs of the land been ever the portion of the juſt. In a country, where ignorance and poverty reign, I ſee two prieſts; one of them haranguing his auditors with money in his hand, the other diſtributing nothing but words. Which of theſe preachers will produce moſt fruit? It is the province of government alone to preach like the former.

Obſerve the effect of rewards upon any talents, and you will conclude what it may perform

perform in behalf of virtue. We abound in painters, ſculptors, muſicians, and comedians; but we want good citizens. At the time when crowns were given to the victors at public games, much greater rewards were beſtowed upon thoſe who ſignalized themſelves in the ſervice and love of their country. The emperor Galba gave a recompence to a ſinger, but declared it came out of his own private purſe; had it been for the relief of an indigent ſoldier, he would have drawn it without apology from the public treaſure. Diſtinctions muſt be inſtituted for people of fortune, and pecuniary rewards for thoſe who labour for ſubſiſtance. We know, that the king of Pruſſia gives prizes in money to ſuch as beſt ſucceed in the culture of mulberry-trees and ſilk worms. It is thus this prince, an œconomiſt in every article of royal luxury,

diffuſes his liberality to the encouragement of agriculture and commerce.

This ſyſtem of rewards and puniſhments muſt have been obvious to every one, who wiſhed to introduce ſound morals among a people. That equality ſo much boaſted of in republics, as a ſource of virtues, is not adequate to the end propoſed. Iſocrates the orator allows only one good equality: it is not that, ſays he, which deals out the ſame advantages to every citizen, without diſtinguiſhing between the worthleſs and the deſerving; but that which rewards and puniſhes every one according to his deſert.

Xenophon puts into the mouth of Cyrus a memorable ſpeech. "Men," ſays this prince to the chiefs of his army, "practiſe only ſuch "virtues, as are likely to prove uſeful, and "to

" to procure them happineſs ſuperior to what " the idle and vicious can attain. They " who deny themſelves preſent pleaſures, " renounce them only with a view to a more " ample enjoyment of them at another time. " They that dedicate their hours, with pain- " ful attention, to the ſtudy of oratory, do " not deſign to ſacrifice their whole life to " it, but flatter themſelves, that after they " have, by their labour, acquired reputation " and importance, they ſhall taſte a conve- " nient and honourable repoſe. In like " manner, ſoldiers expect not to be always " bearing arms; but that a day will come, " when, to the laurels they have gained in " war, ſhall be added the delightful fruits of " peace."

Cyrus further conſulted this great council of war, whether he ſhould reward merit in

the common ſoldiers, as well as in the officers? as he was determined to puniſh the guilty among both. The council was of opinion, that the ſame hand, which inflicted puniſhments, ought to diſtribute rewards.

I am always aſtoniſhed when I hear of any proof of bravery in our troops. The generals of former times animated their ſoldiery by the promiſed fruits of victory, the ſpoils of the vanquiſhed, lands, crowns, or military promotions. To make men heroes, they muſt be conſidered as men; and the ſame method, which forms them for war by recompence and puniſhment, muſt be purſued in civil affairs, if a ſtate wants virtuous citizens.

It is to little purpoſe, that we multiply ſyſtems, dogmas, and moral treatiſes; for until government ſhall unite honour and proſperity with virtue, infamy and unhappi-

neſs with vice, nothing will be effected: and that country ſtands moſt in need of rewards and puniſhments, where patriotiſm is at the loweſt ebb.

But it is ſaid, if chaſtiſement and recompence are the true ſprings of manners, where is the beauty of virtue? Platoniſts, Stoics, and Quietiſts! confine yourſelves to this delightful image, and leave the more ſubſtantial part of virtue to attract the bulk of mankind. It argues very little knowledge of the human heart, to imagine, that men may be rendered virtuous without a viſible and ſolid advantage. Cato embraced virtue, while ſinking under the ruins of it; but Cato was ſingular.

The celebrated Galen, not ſatisfied to cure the body, deſired a medicine for the mind. "Let thoſe who deny, that different aliments

"render

" render ſome men temperate, others diſſo-
" lute; ſome chaſte, others incontinent;
" ſome brave, others cowards; ſome peace-
" able, others quarrelſome; ſome diffident,
" others preſumptuous: let thoſe, I ſay,
" who deny theſe truths, come to me, and
" follow my directions in what they eat and
" drink: I promiſe them, they ſhall receive
" great aſſiſtance for moral philoſophy.
" They ſhall perceive the faculties of their
" mind enlarged; ſhall acquire greater ge-
" nius, ſtronger memory, more prudence,
" and more attention. I will likewiſe tell
" them, what ſorts of liquors, what viands,
" what temperature of the air, and what cli-
" mate they ſhould chuſe or avoid."

Sublime doctor, your knowledge dazzles me: but virtue ſhould be made to inhabit every country, live in every climate, en-

dure every temperature of air, and incorporate with every kind of diet. Beſides, how will mankind be brought to obey your ordinances? Leave this important, this moral medicine, to the care of government.

When we ſpeak of manners, and the influence of government upon them, diſtinction muſt be made between the crimes which juſtice puniſhes, and the vices it overlooks; between ſuch actions and abilities as are rewarded by the prince, and ſuch virtues as paſs unnoticed. In the deteſted cities of * Babylon and † Sybaris, theſts, robberies, rapes, poiſonings, and aſſaſſinations, were

* Babylon, the capital of Chaldea, famous for its extent, buildings, wealth, voluptuouſneſs, and debauchery.

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puniſhed as elſewhere; but ingratitude, uncharitableneſs, breach of promiſe, cowardice, prodigality, debauchery, adultery, time-ſerving juſtice, oppreſſion, idleneſs, fraud, and injuſtice in the great; all ſuch vices, though the bane of ſociety, were accounted neither diſhoneſt or diſhonourable. From this ſink of corruption might probably ariſe ſome virtues, but ſuch, as being of ſmall eſtimation, and paſſing unrewarded, periſhed without producing fruit. Prizes were given to buffoons and muſicians, improvements in cookery, new faſhions in dreſs, and other arts of luxury and voluptuouſneſs. The Perſians and Crotoniates, two virtuous nations, did juſtice at length upon thoſe cities that neglected to do it themſelves: they were overwhelmed by the weight of their vices, while a prudent government, by giving them virtues, would have preſerved them. Every

other

other power moves very ſlowly towards a reformation of manners: what a length of time has it required to convince courts of judicature, that it was cruel to burn unhappy wretches accuſed of ſorcery? but government purſues a ſhorter and more certain method to reform abuſes.

I am however ſenſible, that we muſt not confide much in airy ſpeculations, which often reſemble mechanical inventions, that ſeem plauſible in the model, but fail in the execution. To attribute to government the power of creating manners, is doing, like Plato, in his plan of a republic, who brings the inhabitants of heaven to people the earth. To aſk, if it be poſſible to diffuſe manners through extenſive countries, which contain, like all others, the ſeeds of every vice, is to aſk, if, in all the revolutions, and various

forms

forms of government, there ever was really found a virtuous people.

Ariſtotle informs us, that in the republic of Carthage, from the foundation of it to the time he wrote in, which was more than four hundred years, there never happened any ſedition of conſequence, nor did any tyrant ariſe to infringe the liberties of the people. Such a length of tranquillity and good order naturally ſuppoſes ſound morals, both in the governing and the governed. Every ſtate, where neither the laws are eluded, nor the power of magiſtracy abuſed, muſt, of courſe, be the reſidence of virtues.

Plato was undoubtedly acquainted with the inſtitutions and manners of the Spartans. 'As God,' ſays he, 'after having finiſhed 'the world, rejoiced in himſelf, when he be-

'held

'held it perform its firſt motions with ſo 'much regularity and harmony; ſo Lycur-'gus, charmed with the greatneſs and beauty 'of his laws, felt an increaſe of pleaſure, 'when he ſaw them capable of execution, 'and ſo perfectly fulfilling his deſign.' Many ages after their firſt inſtitution, ſtrangers expreſſed their wonder in theſe terms: MEN ARE BORN VIRTUOUS AT SPARTA, AND THE VERY AIR OF THE COUNTRY SEEMS TO INSPIRE VIRTUE. While every other ſtate of Greece was corrupted, Sparta, in a great meaſure, ſtill retained its manners. Were I to draw a true picture of them, it would be a ſevere ſatire on our own. Five hundred years could hardly ſhake this noble edifice of Lycurgus.

It is well known, that Solon, by a leſs rigid inſtitution, ſecured to the Athenians a whole

whole century of virtue: this was the age of Miltiades, Themiſtocles, Ariſtides, Pythagoras, and Socrates: in ſhort, it was the age of juſtice, generoſity, probity, reverence for the laws, fortitude, and victory.

In the liſt of virtuous nations, Rome ought not to be omitted. Let the lovers of arts, genius, talents, politeneſs, and elegance, boaſt as they will of the Auguſtan age; but virtue is the ſubject in queſtion. This brilliant æra, as they call it, reſembles thoſe fiery meteors, that owe their luſtre to the corrupted matter which compoſes them. From the expulſion of the kings, to the ſecond Punic war, was the period when virtue ſeemed natural to both the ſexes, and to every order of the ſtate. It was then that marriages were chaſte, repaſts frugal, oaths ſacred,

ſacred, contracts juſt, and faith inviolate; and then it was that a generous diſintereſtedneſs, a love of their country, ſhone forth in magiſtrates, in generals, and in the people. Virtue was ſo habitual and common, that Cicero, ſpeaking of Regulus, who, after diſſuading the exchange of priſoners, returned to Carthage to fulfil his promiſe, under all the horrors of expected puniſhment, obſerves, that it was the virtue of the times, and not of the man: *Laus eſt temporum, non hominis.* Brutus, Valerius, Publicola, Curius, Fabricius, Marcellus, the Scipios, and many others: what names! what men! If all the citizens were not endowed with their talents, they endeavoured, at leaſt, to acquire their ſocial virtues.

What! ſtill dwelling upon Greeks and Romans? Will you never ceaſe to tire us with

leſſons of their wiſdom? I aſk your pardon; I judged, from your manners, that they had never been mentioned to you.

But I hear ſome politicians more gravely obſerve, that Rome, Athens, Sparta, and Carthage, were republics. What then! cannot virtue ſubſiſt in monarchies? Let us conſult Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and we ſhall find, that the inhabitants of thoſe cities, that wiſhed to obtain wiſdom, went into Egypt for inſtruction, where the kings and grandees exhibited ſuch examples, as the lower claſs of people would have bluſhed not to imitate.

The Perſians, ſo corrupt under Darius, had been virtuous during ſeveral reigns: virtue, among them, was taught juſt as ſciences are in other countries; every ſubject, without diſtinction, was formed to juſtice, humanity, hoſpi-

hoſpitality, economy, ſobriety, obedience, patience, fortitude; the only true and liberal education. Military virtues were founded on civil. It was with ſuch manners, and ſuch men, that the great Cyrus gave laws from the river Indus to the Tigris, and from the Caſpian ſea to the Ocean.

Let us deſcend to more modern ages: the memory of the great Alfred will be always held in veneration in Great Britain: he found his kingdom in the moſt deplorable condition; every rank of men committed thefts and robberies without controul. Alfred ſtretched the ſprings of his government; and when he had brought the great, the army, and the people, under his power, by means of civil polity, he made an experiment, which ſuppoſed an amazing reformation: he ſecretly hung up golden bracelets in

the highways, and no one dared to diſplace them; and the change he wrought in this part of public manners, he accompliſhed in all the reſt.

But let us ſearch our own records, and ſee if the ancient monarchy of France cannot produce ſome period of virtue; and if a barbarous age can furniſh an inſtance of it, the example will be ſtill the more ſtriking. When Charlemagne came to the throne, and introduced a ſecond race, the vices of the firſt, after long fermentation, had rendered public manners ſo ſavage and atrocious, that every order of the ſtate ſought only the deſtruction of each other. This prince, a legiſlator, patriot, and philoſopher, (for the light of philoſophy ſtill glimmered to a few) made juſtice and concord flouriſh; but this he never could have effected, had he not in-

fuſed virtue into the hearts of theſe barbarians, and attached them to the public welfare by the allurement of private benefit. Let the panegyriſts of the glory of monarchs exclaim, that Charlemagne was a great conqueror: I know and overlook that character, to remember only, that he gave manners to to his people. His ſon, whoſe virtue was confined to himſelf, ſuffered his ſubjects to relapſe into their old diſorders.

There are perſons who allow no merit to virtue, becauſe they do not concern themſelves to acquire it: there are others, who think it commendable in themſelves, and a few diſtinguiſhed worthies, but do not conceive it intended for the generality of mankind. We have not ſeen thoſe Egyptians, Perſians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Ro-

mans, nor the Franks under Charlemagne, or the Britons under Alfred.

Hiſtory, like painting, embelliſhes, at pleaſure, objects which no longer exiſt. Human paſſions, in all ages the ſame, muſt always produce the ſame depravity. There are about a thouſand millions of ſouls upon the earth; if we can point out to you one inſtance, in the preſent generation, of a virtuous people, you will undertake to follow their example.

Do you wiſh to ſee a virtuous people?—If they are ſhewed to you, will you obſerve them attentively? Go to the foot of the Alps, there you will find, in a flouriſhing city, laborious citizens, ever engaged in induſtry, commerce, and ſcience; you will there ſee happy marriages, venerable fathers, dutiful children,

children, chaſte mothers, and modeſt virgins; you will obſerve neatneſs without luxury, and frugality without avarice; few law-ſuits, and moſt of thoſe accommodated by common friends, nay even by lawyers and judges; no gallows, for it is ſeldom wanted; extreme decency in public worſhip; divines of great learning, and conſequently leſs addicted to diſputation. The philoſopher of Geneva *, diſſatisfied with his fellow-citizens, cautions them to watch over their liberty; but he has never reproached them with corruption of manners.

Do you wiſh to ſee a virtuous people? Repair to an immenſe city, the rival of Paris; there you may find a remarkable tribe, mixt with the reſt of the world by their occupa-

* J. J. Rouſſeau.

tions, but ſeparated from them by their religion, and ſtill more ſo by their manners.

The Quakers, ridiculed by the gay world, are ſtrangers to intemperance, brutality, fraud, injuſtice, and violence; ſeldom charged with falſehood, when cited to appear as witneſſes in courts of judicature, the law ſo highly reſpects their probity, that it admits their affirmation in lieu of an oath. In trade, which they are all engaged in, the buyer never aſks abatement, becauſe he knows the ſeller will not exact. The law to puniſh bankrupts was not made againſt them; for if, by an inevitable misfortune, a Quaker ſhould fail, his brethren would ſet him up again. They are never found in tumults, or popular commotions; and being excluded from all poſts, dignities, and honours, they know

know how to be happy in humility, in a close application to their business, and in the bosom of their families. They practise one virtue, which will always render them obnoxious to princes; and that is, they will not fight. They say, there are lions and tigers enough without them; but, in obedience to the laws, they furnish money to feed the lions and tigers. This flock of sheep, this band of honest people, is only a remnant, as is well known, of that large colony, which makes Pensylvania flourish. That just and pacific conqueror, William Penn, forsook the pleasures, the titles, and the elegancies of London, and went to establish the reign of virtue among the savages of America: without arms, deceit, or violence, he purchased of them his empire, and gave to the metropolis of it the noble name of Philadelphia, because it was founded on brotherly-

brotherly-love.—Will it be ſaid, that it is not very difficult to ſpread virtue among a few people; that ſome thouſands of Quakers in London, Penſylvania, and Geneva, make but a handful of good men, who have eſcaped the general wreck? But ſhew us a great nation that is virtuous, and has continued ſo for a length of time, and we will try to imitate it.—The chronology of the Chineſe empire, and its manners, reaches as far back as the emperor Hias, who lived two thouſand four hundred years before our vulgar æra; and who, during a reign of eighty years, endeavoured to render his ſubjects wiſe and happy. Let us however date the moral conſtitution of China only from the laws of Confucius, which are now of two thouſand three hundred years ſtanding. Is this nation of ſufficient antiquity? The empire of China contains two hundred millions of ſubjects,

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while all Europe is not eſtimated at more than one hundred millions. Is this nation populous enough? Let us now recollect what we have read concerning this empire.

All Engliſh, French, and Dutch travellers, merchants, or philoſophers, and even miſſionaries, (who, like phyſicians, often paint things worſe than they are, in order to gain more credit by the cure) agree, that the Chineſe are of a quiet and docile diſpoſition; of great affability in their behaviour; not addicted to violent paſſions, even in the public markets, where, in other countries, the hurry and confuſion occaſions ſo much noiſe and ſcurrilous language, the forerunner of quarrels and ſkirmiſhes; inſtead of which, ruſtics are ſeen kneeling to each other, aſking pardon for the diſorders they impute to themſelves, and with great chearfulneſs

neſs aſſiſting to remove the obſtruction; that the Chineſe never take any violent meaſures in their reſentment; that if they happen to have a ſtick, or iron inſtrument in their hands, they quit it, for fear of drawing blood, and terminate their quarrel at fifty cuffs; that even thieves make uſe of no violence, and have recourſe only to artifice and addreſs; that no nation is more laborious, more induſtrious, or more ſober; that the ſun never ſees them out of action; ſome cultivate the ground, ſome fabricate manufactures, and others ſell them. I know they are accuſed of impoſing upon ſtrangers; but they allege, that it is an art they learned from Europeans: and certain it is, they are not reproached with defrauding one another. If this be a true character of the common people, what may be ſuppoſed that of a ſuperior rank? All accounts of this nation in-

form

form us, that in no part of the world are to be found more humane maſters, more vigilant magiſtrates, more upright judges, or great men more worthy of imitation.

A writer, who extorts our admiration, even when led aſtray by the fire of his genius, tells us, THAT THERE IS NO VICE BUT WHAT REIGNS AMONG THE CHINESE; NO CRIME BUT WHAT IS FAMILIAR TO THEM*. From whence has he drawn this accuſation? There are certainly vices ſtill ſubſiſting, nay, crimes are ſometimes committed in this immenſe nation, becauſe, in ſhort, the Chineſe are men. They are principally to be met

* A diſcourſe, that carried the prize at the academy of Dijon, and would be applauded every where, if truth was not a neceſſary ingredient in ſuch conteſts, on the inequality of mankind, by J. J. Rouſſeau.

with

with among the lower claſs of people, infatuated by the ſuperſtition of the Bonzes, and blind to the pure doctrines taught by Confucius, and the learned. But it is equally certain, that the Chineſe nation is the leaſt vicious of any we are acquainted with; that crimes are there leſs common, and virtue more general.

Wiſdom, of ſuch extent and duration as this, may eſtabliſh the credit of the virtue of ancient Egypt and Perſia; as the wiſdom of ſome ſmall modern republics renders probable the manners of Sparta, Athens, and Rome.

In the few nations that ſerve for examples, we find government with puniſhment in one hand, and rewards in the other, always attentive to, and operating upon, every claſs

of the community. On one ſide are ſeen deprivations, degradations, diſgrace, and chaſtiſements of every kind; and, on the other, pecuniary gifts, public diſtinctions, precedency, titles, ſtatues, and crowns: vices fly at the approach of correction, and virtues aſſemble at the proſpect of gratification.

Puniſhment and recompence muſt therefore be continually in ſearch of vice and virtue, in order to do juſtice to both; the great difficulty lies in carrying on this enquiry with equity, conſtancy, and perſeverance. If the matter in queſtion concerned only a little republic, where every thing is brought into a narrow compaſs, the regulation would be almoſt as eaſy as in a private family; but when it relates to an empire of vaſt extent, what is the plan to attain it?

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This plan muſt be ſought for in hiſtory; for by adhering to facts we run no riſk of roving into ſyſtems. Had Deſcartes, in his attempt to diſcover the laws of the phyſical world, taken experiments for his guide, he would have been the Newton of France, and of all other nations. But to reduce the moral world to order by a conſiſtent plan, is a work of much greater importance; and ſuch as has not been attempted by any moraliſt. They all cry out, make the people virtuous, if you wiſh they ſhould be happy and reſpected; nay, if you mean they ſhould be triumphant and illuſtrious. Government is perfectly ſenſible of this; but the more a remedy is thought of, the more they deſpair of ſucceſs, from the difficulties that preſent themſelves. We are not unacquainted, ſay they, with the force of rewards and puniſhments; but there are ſo many vices to be

out, and ſo many virtues to be planted, that the cleareſt ſight is confounded and loſt in the chaos. But the light of hiſtory has diſſipated much obſcurity.

In thoſe virtuous nations I have mentioned, while government is inceſſantly occupied in rewarding and puniſhing, its attention is, at the ſame time, employed in facilitating the execution and diſtribution of both. By dividing and ſubdividing large ſocieties into ſmall bodies, a ſuperintendant may be appointed to each.

We learn from Diodorus, that in Egypt, all the citizens, being regiſtered, ſerved as a guard upon each other; and that the whole body of the ſtate was, by a judicious diſtinction, united againſt the profligate. The Perſians, under Cambyſes, were divided into

tribes; each tribe had its preſident, and every ſubdiviſion its overſeer: and when Cyrus, the ſon of Cambyſes, by enlarging his father's plan, had re-united the empires of Babylon, and of the Medes, in the Perſian, he was able to ſupport theſe virtuous inſtitutions through his widely extended monarchy.

Athens, before the time of Solon, had no regulation of public manners; by diſtributing the citizens into as many claſſes as was requiſite to enable the Areopagites and Archons to adminiſter a good police, univerſal order was eſtabliſhed. The prophecy of Anacharſis to Solon, that his laws reſembled cobwebs, wherein the weak would be entangled, but which the rich and powerful would break through, was not fulfilled till the ſprings of government were relaxed, and the legiſlator's plan forſaken.

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The Spartans had no occaſion for a regulated polity; becauſe, having, by a wonderful mode of legiſlation, known only there, and, in our days, in Paraguay, baniſhed *meum* and *tuum*, that inexhauſtible ſource of contention, they lived like bees, always together, and in common around their king, who acted as a joint overſeer with the whole body, and compoſed one undiſtinguiſhed claſs of honeſt people.

The Roman nation was ſubdivided into wards, or hundreds; ſo that every hundred men, notwithſtanding the amazing increaſe of people in the flouriſhing times of the republic, had a centurion over them, who could eaſily diſcover thoſe that merited puniſhment, or reward.—Charlemagne, who collected together the corrupted remnant of the Roman empire, felt the neceſſity of di-

viding ſuch a multitude of people into many diſtricts, which he increaſed in a ſuitable proportion to the wholeſome regulations he deſigned to eſtabliſh. Before his time, theſe diſtricts were intruſted to the management of one duke only; but he foreſaw, that one magiſtrate alone, at the head of each province, would either neglect his duty, or abuſe his power; and, therefore, divided the adminiſtration among ſeveral earls, in order to render it more eaſy and exact. He went farther; officers, ſelected out of the order of prelates, and nobility, called Royal Envoys, were directed to viſit each diſtrict every three months, and give an account of their inquiries to the prince. In ſuch a conſtitution, the manners of individuals could hardly eſcape the notice of the magiſtrates; and the magiſtrates themſelves were narrowly watched.

watched. If Charlemagne did not fully ſucceed in his deſign, it was owing to his proſecuting only one part of his plan.

Alfred carried the diviſion of his ſubjects farther, for the benefit of regulation. The whole nation was diſtributed into counties, the counties into hundreds; and every head of a family was made anſwerable for the conduct of his children, his ſervants, and even his gueſts. The ten heads that lived neareſt together, formed a ſort of community, and were reſponſible for one another; by which means every individual found his own ſecurity in watching over the behaviour of his neighbour; and in ſome meaſure guaranteed the probity of his own claſs. It is thus that, in an army of one or two hundred thouſand men, by dividing them at firſt into brigades, brigades into regiments, regiments into bat-

talions, battalions into companies, and by placing vigilant officers at the head of each grand or leſſer diviſion, in ſubordination to each other, military licentioufneſs is repreſſed, and a diſcipline eſtabliſhed, which, in the opinion of competent judges, confers more honour on a general, than a victory; becauſe it is, in itſelf, the foundation of victory.

It is with the eſtabliſhment of manners, as with the culture of the earth; grant large tracts of land to one man, and he will cultivate only ſuch a portion as produces moſt profit with the leaſt expence; divide this territory among a thouſand huſbandmen, every part will be cultivated, and produce ſomething. In like manner, large political ſocieties muſt be divided into ſuch ſmall bodies, that each may feel the hand of govern-

ment

ment by means of their immediate director; and this will form a ſet of moral people. Our diviſions into provinces, generalities, and governments, have relation only to geography, revenue, and military diſpoſition, but are not in the leaſt relative to manners. Even thoſe juriſdictions that ſeem to aim at this point, what effect do they produce? Without taking cognizance of merit, crimes are puniſhed, and yet vices ſtill ſubſiſt.

Let us ceaſe to wonder at the virtues of the Chineſe, and the vices of Europeans. The former, convinced that morals are intimately connected with education, open no other road to power and dignities than that of learning. It is from among the men of letters, an order ſo little eſteemed in other countries, that all officers of juſtice and po-

lice, governours and miniſters, are ſelected; the care, therefore, and regulation of this order, became a matter of the higheſt importance. A great mandarine, who has himſelf paſſed through this ſchool, aſſembles all the graduates in every city of his department, and having ſtrictly examined them concerning the inſtitutions of the empire, and their own private conduct, divides them into ſix claſſes. The firſt and ſecond receive a gratification; the third is neither rewarded nor corrected; the fourth and fifth are puniſhed in a ſlight manner, in hopes of a reformation; but the laſt is rejected, and thrown back into the multitude. This people would very ill obey magiſtrates, who wanted capacity and virtue. The public officers are very numerous, in order that, by leſſening the burden of their employ, each may be enabled

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to diſcharge his reſpective duty. Nine orders of mandarines, ſubordinate to one another, ſhare among them the management of the general police; two thouſand four hundred at court, and twenty-two thouſand in the provinces. Each ſuperior mandarine ſuperintends the conduct of his inferiors, and tranſmits to the court informations of them; SUCH A ONE IS CRUEL, CAPRICIOUS, UNSTEADY, PROUD, RASH, PASSIONATE, AVARICIOUS, UNJUST: OR SUCH A ONE IS A MAN OF INTEGRITY, STEADY, HUMANE, BENEVOLENT, AND SKILLED IN THE ART OF GOVERNMENT. When theſe notices arrive at Pekin, the ſupreme council decrees rewards or puniſhments. But this is not all; the emperor ſecretly ſends into the provinces cenſors, who gain admittance into the courts of judicature, while the mandarine is giving audience; or collects intelligence

gence from the people concerning his administration. If any irregularity is discovered in the conduct of these officers, the censors immediately produce their commission from the emperor, and punish the guilty. These censors, thus concealed, are always supposed present.

The punishment of crimes in Europe seldom extends beyond the lower class of people; but the Chinese government bears equally upon every rank. The emperor Kanghi, who reigned in 1727, making a progress into his provinces, saw an old man weeping in the street. He enquired what ailed him? To which the man replied, I had a son, the comfort of my age; but a mandarine has tore him from me. The emperor took the old man up behind him, went to the mandarine's house, ordered his trial directly, condemned him to

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be beheaded, and gave his poſt to the old man, accompanied with theſe words: "Take "care to do nothing that may bring thee un- "der a neceſſity of ſerving for an example in "thy turn."

If, at any time, an European miniſter is puniſhed, it ſeems to be done with reluctance, for fear of reflecting diſhonour upon the prince, by intimating to the public that he had made an improper choice.

The Imperial Gazette in China gives notice to the whole empire of the depoſition of ſuch mandarines as preſided over cities or provinces. THIS LOST HIS PLACE FOR NEGLIGENCE IN THE DISPATCH OF BUSINESS: THAT FOR HIS IGNORANCE OF THE LAWS AND CUSTOMS: A THIRD, BECAUSE HE OPPRESSED, OR MISREPRESENTED, THE PEOPLE. Thus the

the gazette, which in Europe ſerves only to amuſe the indolent, becomes in China a guardian of manners, and a ſpring of government.

The great in Europe, like the degenerate, fabulous Gods, ſeem to be ſcreened from the thunder of puniſhment; but, in China, ſuch as anſwer not the public expectations, are degraded from their dignities, loſe their emoluments, and are allowed only a moderate penſion from the imperial treaſury for their ſubſiſtence. A thouſand examples of this kind might be found in their hiſtoric annals; but let it ſuffice to produce one that is modern and remarkable. The ſame emperor I before quoted, hearing that a prince of his blood ſpent his time in idleneſs, in unmanly and trifling amuſements, declared him deprived of his titles, of his honours,

and

and his penſion, till he found occaſion to repair his fault by ſome heroic action. But the whole empire trembled, and were aſtoniſhed, when he ſpared not his own ſon, the only ſon he had by his lawful wife; and it ſpread univerſal terror, to ſee their heir to the throne, with all his officers, loaded with irons, and confined to a cloſe priſon.

A government, however, that knows only how to puniſh, can expect to make nothing but ſlaves, who will gnaw their chain till it breaks aſunder.

In Europe, favours are conferred upon birth and rank, through ſolicitations and intrigue; while China knows no other, but the reward of merit.

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In moſt of the ſtates which we are acquainted with, if rewards are ever given, to whoſe ſhare do they fall? to a warrior, an ambaſſador, or a miniſter of ſtate. What! are there no more than two or three ſpecies of merit? A magiſtrate that, in ſupporting the dignity of the laws, ſupports his own; an orator, that dedicates his talents to the defence of the oppreſſed; a philoſopher, that frees his country from ſome fatal prejudices; a merchant, who by his knowledge, induſtry, and probity, enriches his family, and his nation; a paſtor, that out of his own narrow income feeds the poor ruſtics whom he inſtructs; are ſuch as theſe to be neglected? Is it a matter of indifference, whether men of this ſort are encouraged or multiplied? When rewards in China have run through the higheſt order of the ſtate, they

ſtop not there, but deſcend to ſeek merit among that claſs of people which we confound with the beaſts that till the ground. An imperial order enjoins the governors of the towns annually to tranſmit to the court the name of every farmer in the diſtrict, who ſhall diſtinguiſh himſelf by his application to agriculture, by his irreproachable conduct, by the good order of his family, and the harmony he maintains with his neighbours. Such a man is raiſed by the emperor to the degree of an honorary mandarine; he aſſumes the habit of the order, and theſe honours follow him to the grave; his funeral obſequies are performed ſuitable to his rank, and his titles are regiſtered in the manſion of his family. Behold him now ennobled! ſhould we not conclude him, from theſe rewards, to have been a fortunate warrior? China is but

little

little acquainted with war; but ſhe is ſenſible that bread is always neceſſary. I will not join with a moraliſt in ſaying, philanthrophy ſometimes carries things too far: "LET US "SUFFER THAT HORRIBLE PREJUDICE TO "CONTINUE, WHICH PLACES THE HONOUR "OF SHEDDING HUMAN BLOOD IN THE "LIST OF VIRTUES. Since a ſtate is liable to be invaded, it is doubtleſs a great virtue to ſtand up in its defence; and to ſuch we readily yield the higheſt prize: but other virtues are of ſufficient value to deſerve encouragement.

It is not difficult to prove, in oppoſition to Hobbes, that man is naturally good. Nature has given him neither horns to attack, claws to tear, nor teeth to devour; his ſkin is not covered with ſcales; the gentle lamb is,

is, by his fleece, better ſecured from injury; no conſtitution is more tender; every thing may hurt, every thing may deſtroy him. His firſt ſenſation is fear, the ſecond pity: he is the only animal ſuſceptible of compaſſion, and grief for the calamities of his fellows. If, in the infancy of the world, Cain ſlew his brother Abel, it was owing to his having no idea of death; and he was undoubtedly ignorant, that the blow he gave would be attended with that conſequence. The cauſe of human depravity is the prevalence of that injurious opinion, that virtue muſt be uſeleſs, ſince vice is generally proſperous: man muſt be brought back to his native goodneſs, by ſeeing the one rewarded and the other puniſhed.

Government is either ignorant of its own power, or will not exert it: it has been able to transform ſavage cruelty into a virtue; a duel into an act of juſtice; the pile of the inquiſition into a burnt-offering; a cruſade into heroiſm; and being now become more enlightened, far from undermining morality, it ſhould eſtabliſh it by fear and hope. If virtue depended upon climate, things muſt of neceſſity take their own courſe; but Greece, ſo fertile in great men formerly, now produces only a race of ſlaves: the climate is ſtill the ſame, but the government is altered. Holland, on the contrary, feeble and unnoticed under the Spaniſh yoke, gave birth to a race of heroes under the ſtandard of liberty; and, in our days, a province in Germany, which laid dov n its arms at the beginning of the laſt war, has been able to command

command victory under a general who raiſed it above itſelf.

I am ſenſible that government will find more difficulty in reforming the civil than the military orders: a few virtues will ſuffice to diſtinguiſh the latter; but they muſt all unite to give harmony to the former: beſides, it is much eaſier to diſcipline a hundred thouſand ſoldiers, than to form twenty millions of citizens. However, when the Roman republic conceived the idea of giving laws to the world, it was not deterred by the vaſtneſs of the deſign. The ſame machine which raiſes a figure of ſix feet to a given height, will raiſe a coloſſus. He that ſhall diſcover the ſecret to fill one city with virtuous inhabitants, may, by purſuing the ſame method, people a whole kingdom.

Let us draw towards a concluſion. After having demonſtrated that government is in poſſeſſion of the two great ſprings of morals, rewards and puniſhments; after having conſulted hiſtory to inveſtigate the different ways of putting theſe ſprings into motion; ſhall I venture, by collecting together theſe ſcattered pieces, to draw the deſign of ſo immenſe a plan? Why not? Before an inventive genius had formed the model of that temple, which Rome and all the world admire, many plans of it muſt have been ſketched out, which, though vaſtly inferior in grandeur to the laſt, yet contained the principle of that ſublime ſtructure. Another may improve upon my hints.

Let us then ſuppoſe a city, large as Paris, and debauched as Sybaris; that luxury there abounds; that trifling arts are highly eſteemed,

eſteemed, and uſeful ones deſpiſed; that a varniſher, a toyman, a dancing-maſter, gain more in one day than all the labourers of a province earn in a month; that modeſty is baniſhed from it; that virgins deſire huſbands only as a cover for licentiouſneſs; that marriages are openly violated by both ſexes; and virtuous wives, if any ſuch can be found, mourn, while proſtitutes triumph; that debauchery poiſons the very ſource of the human ſpecies; that fear on one ſide, and exceſs of luxury on the other, hinder both rich and poor from raiſing families; that old men retain the vices of youth, and young ones are old in conſtitution, before they arrive at maturity; that in this city money is never wanting for diverſions, for feaſting, for dreſs; but none can be found for the payment of debts, or for the relief of the indigent; that every place glitters with ſilks,

gold, and jewels, while the churches and ſtreets ſwarm with beggars; that every one finds his account in the ruin of his neighbour; that an agreeable addreſs in men amply ſuplies this want of principle; that vices are the ſubjects of pleaſantry; and a man may indulge in them without reſerve, if he can jeſt on them himſelf; that all places are diſpoſed of by favour, or purchaſed by money; that even the right of judging, and being judged, is ſold; that the public treaſure is plundered; that the ſanctuary is polluted; that the great men are mean; and the populace, worthy of ſuch ſuperiors, become a fruitful nurſery of rogues, thieves, and aſſaſſins. What a city! what a capital! But bad as it is, I undertake to give it manners; and if I ſucceed here, the provinces, always leſs corrupt, will ſoon be reformed.

I begin

I begin by enlarging paternal authority, the firſt and moſt ſacred of all. This is the power derived from God; the power which governed the firſt race of men before the inſtitution of kings, and was the foundation and model of the Chineſe government for ſo many ages, while the reſt of the world lay ſubjected to the caprice of tyrants; and Romulus placed it at the head of his laws, though he perhaps extended it too far; he permitted a father not only to impriſon his children, to load them with chains, to ſentence them to public chaſtiſement with rods, to condemn them to the labours of the field, and to diſinherit them, but even to ſell, or put them to death. I would grant every power to fathers except thoſe of ſale and death. When we reflect that it is a father who puniſhes, there is little reaſon to fear an exceſs of correction. Romulus, perhaps, carried

the duration of paternal authority too far: no age or dignity exempted children from this juriſdiction. The term I would propoſe is, the age of twenty-five years, when manhood begins. When a child has been well educated till this time, if he then falls into irregularities, let him be ſubject to the laws. But from hence ariſes an obligation upon a father; inveſted with ſuch ample powers, he muſt not be ſurpriſed, if; after the example of China, he be anſwerable for the conduct of his children, under the penalty of puniſhment for their defaults. The law ſuppoſes that, if a father had properly trained up a ſon, the offence would not have been committed; and, at the worſt, the puniſhment of one innocent perſon, which is ſometimes inevitable under the beſt conſtituted laws, would prevent a hundred other fathers from being guilty.

My

My ſecond ſtep ſhould be to re-eſtabliſh the authority of huſbands. It is well known what that was in the days of the Patriarchs; the principal ſtudy of the Sarahs and Rachels was to pleaſe their huſbands. That tender reſpect for the head of the family would have kept them to their duty, had they even been deſtitute of virtue. The fair ſex, throughout the Eaſt, had been long accuſtomed to this ſalutary ſubordination; and thoſe Weſtern nations, that paid any attention to manners, gave it place in their inſtitutions. Under the firſt Roman laws, an offending wife had no other judge than her huſband, who, ſummoning her relations together, ſat with them in judgment upon the fault. To the wiſdom of this law it was owing, that for ſeveral ages no complaint againſt wives appeared in any court of judicature; no action for adultery; nor even for a di-

a divorce. It was not till after the firſt Punic war that Spulius Cervilius * ſued for a divorce from his wife; an act which raiſed aſtoniſhment, and gave offence to the public. At Athens there was a particular magiſtrate appointed to ſuperintend the behaviour of women; but the true and natural magiſtrate is the huſband, A philoſopher of our times, who is cenſured for advancing paradoxes, has mixed with them many truths, which we overlook: "THE FAIR SEX, ſays he, IN-"CAPABLE OF ADOPTING OUR MODE OF "LIVING, TOO ROBUST FOR THEM, OBLI-"GES US TO ASSUME THEIRS, TOO EFFE-"MINATE FOR US." This ſubverſion of order, this influence of a ſex that was formed to be controuled, takes its riſe in families, and from thence ſpreads and corrupts the

* Spulius Cervilius ſued for a divorce from his wife for barrenneſs. AUL. GELL.

public.

public. It is women that form the characters of men. Hence it is that we meet with ſo many agreeable, and ſo few virtuous perſons in what is called GOOD COMPANY. Aſia has her ſeraglios, where wives are neceſſarily kept in order. In Europe they are permitted to mix in ſociety. Let them enjoy this privilege; but with ſome employment, under ſome reſtraint, and with ſome decency. DECENCY! What would be the conſequence were huſbands forced to reſt ſatisfied with mere decency? and were wives totally to forget that they ought to be the guardians of manners, and the preſervers of peace? It would then become abſolutely neceſſary to reclaim them by authority. A wife, conſtantly under the inſpection and care of a huſband and maſter who has power to puniſh, would endeavour to win his affections by attaching herſelf to her family: the education

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of children, domeſtic buſineſs, œconomy, harmony, and the public good, would then flouriſh.

A third ſtep ſhould be to increaſe likewiſe the power of maſters over ſervants. It is very aſtoniſhing that the Greeks and Romans, ſo enlightened and ſo humane, ſhould, like barbarians, employ ſlaves inſtead of ſervants. It is, perhaps, ſtill more ſurpriſing that Chriſtian nations, who own a goſpel of brotherly love, condemn their brethren in the Colonies to all the horrors of ſlavery, becauſe they are BLACK. The firſt man that ſaid to another, THOU SHALT BE MY SLAVE, FOR I AM THE STRONGER, muſt have had the heart of a tiger. But the man who firſt ſaid to another, DESTITUTE AS THOU ART, THOU SHALT RECEIVE THY SUBSISTENCE FROM ME IF THOU WILT BE MY SERVANT, made a con-

a contract beneficial to both. But this agreement, by a relaxation of domeſtic diſcipline, is become more grievous to maſters than to ſervants. This claſs of men, who quit the labour of the plough, or other occupations, for an idle attendance in anticham-bers, where they grow every day more corrupt, will not even ſubmit to obey thoſe that give them bread. Their negligence and licentiouſneſs might be overlooked, but their inſolence is inſupportable. Turn them away, ſay ſome. Well, but will better be found? That continual flux and reflux of new ſervants in every houſe, except thoſe where they contribute to the ruin of ſpendthrifts, proves too plainly that there is but little choice. Beſides, if thoſe diſcharged ſervants find no other ſervice, accuſtomed as they are to idleneſs and a kind of independence, without a trade or reſource, what will become of

them? We learn their end from the too frequent executions. The maſter had loſt his ſervant; the ſtate loſes a man. What remedy can be found for this evil? Here is one.—A captain enliſts a ſoldier for life, or at leaſt for ſix years; and if the ſoldier abandons his duty, he is brought back to it by military diſcipline: at the ſame time this ſoldier is expoſed to ſevere labour, to numberleſs dangers, nay to death itſelf, for five-pence a day; while a domeſtic gains as much in a year as is equal to the ſtipend of a ſuperannuated officer. Allow then the maſter over his ſervant ſome part, at leaſt, of the authority which the captain has over his ſoldier. Let the contract between them be for a ſtipulated time, ſtill leaving the maſter at liberty to diſmiſs him at pleaſure; or if the maſter will retain him in hopes of amendment, let his word be taken as far as

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the puniſhment of confinement, or ſuch other correction as is adequate to it. But, that there may not be a want of ſervants, let there be a well regulated regiſter kept of ſervants out of employment, who may ſupply the place of ſuch as are under correction, and be paid out of their wages. It is eaſy to foreſee that this part of the public regulation, ſo neceſſary to the quiet of families, will require a particular magiſtrate. You, who are nominally, though not really maſters, and ever complaining of your ſervants, would ſoon then be furniſhed with better.

Servants, children, and mothers, being thus formed to manners, the next conſideration is to communicate them to the heads of families; to ſuch as are often men of credit without being men of worth. I compute the houſes that compoſe the city, which I mean

to reform. German Brice reckons only twenty-four thouſand in Paris; there ſhall be, if you pleaſe, one or two hundred thouſand in my city of Sybaris: numbers do not frighten me. I affix a number on each houſe, with a liſt of its inhabitants, and their profeſſion if they have any. How many perſons would then bluſh for having none? They are well contented to be uſeleſs to the ſtate, but dread to be known as ſuch.

Over every ten houſes I place a cenſor, and the twelve cenſors that live neareſt together ſhall compoſe a court of juſtice, to take cognizance of virtue and vice: and over every hundred cenſors I appoint an inſpector, ſubject to the juriſdiction of a ſupreme tribunal.

This

This order of cenſors ſhall be diſtinct from courts of judicature: it ſhall concern itſelf neither about matters of property, or things of a criminal nature; but its object ſhall be ſuch vices as juſtice does not puniſh, and ſuch virtues as it does not reward. Certain it is that ſuch a cenſorſhip, properly executed, will prevent many law-ſuits, and many crimes; and, in time, probably render gibbets and ſcaffolds uſeleſs: an event greatly to be wiſhed for by ſound policy.

This order of cenſors ſhall likewiſe equally be diſtinct from political adminiſtration. The departments of war, and the marine; of negociations, and the finances, may preſerve their preſent eſtabliſhment; but all theſe important branches of government will flouriſh much more if the nation be virtuous. The

objects which this order of cenſors will have in view are quite different from thoſe of the civil government of Paris. For what is expected from this police? If filth does not obſtruct the intercourſe between the ſeveral parts of the city; if the people are leſs liable to be cruſhed by the equipages of the opulent than formerly; if the ſtreets are well enlightened; places of debauchery kept free from riots; popular commotions rare; if robberies, murders, and aſſaſſinations, are leſs frequent, the adminiſtration of the police is juſtly applauded. But how far ſhort is this of a ſtate of manners? In ſpite of theſe prudent regulations, corruption infects every family, and diſcovers its baneful influence on the public.

Cenſors,

Cenſors, under different denominations, have found out the art of checking vice in every government that aimed at virtue. It was not only at Rome that theſe officers were in uſe; the old men among the Perſians; the ephori at Sparta; the conſervators of manners at Athens; the royal envoys under Charlemaigne; and the chiefs of diſtricts under Alfred, proved a terror to the profligate: and, at this time, in the empire of China, there are thouſands of Mandarines ſubject themſelves to the higher controul of the imperial envoys, who watch not only over crimes, but over ſuch vices alſo as lead to crimes.

The eſtabliſhment I propoſe preſuppoſes a good public education as eſſential to its ſucceſs: it ſhall not be formed on the plan

of Emilius *; which, were it unexceptionable and feaſible, could not be of univerſal uſe: nor ſhall it be that adopted in our colleges, which the public ſo much exclaim againſt; but it ſhall be ſuch an education as reſults from the combined ideas of Locke, Montagne, Plutarch, Xenophon, and Plato; ſuch as teaches things before languages, that are often uſeleſs to thoſe who learn them; ſuch as, inſtead of being uniformly the ſame for all, ſhall, by ranging the ſtudents into ſeparate claſſes, ſuitable to the events and exigencies of the ſtate, and adapting proper exerciſes to each, form fit ſubjects for arts, commerce, war, law, negociations, and the church; ſuch an education as ſhall have nothing in common among the different divi-

* A Treatiſe on Education, by J. J. Rouſſeau.

ſions,

ſions, but religion and the practice of juſtice. We have pens enough ready at the prince's command to work at a code of inſtitutions; but the fruits of it would ſoon degenerate if not preſerved by the attention of government, and eſpecially by public cenſors. Under the preſent mode of education, we often ſee youths of ſtrong natural abilities, who raiſe great expectations in the early part of life, but produce nothing as they advance to manhood. Men muſt be ſupported and encouraged in the rugged path of virtue.

Will you try the power of cenſors in an order the moſt difficult to reſtrain, the nobility? This body is in poſſeſſion of extenſive territories, prerogatives, titles, dignities, honours, and commands: all theſe advantages

of grandeur and influence, derived from the merits of anceſtors, ſerve their deſcendants for a barrier to their vices. The cuſtom eſtabliſhed for ſo many ages in Europe, which makes nobility deſcend and continue in the ſame blood, however vitiated and corrupted, will not admit of the Chineſe remedy, where nobility is merely perſonal, and may be forfeited. Such a regulation might be productive of many virtues, of humanity in particular. What reaſon can be aſſigned why European nobles treat the common people with ſo much pride and ſeverity? It is becauſe they are ſure of never being reduced to a level with them. Why are the Chineſe and Turks, in general, more humane and hoſpitable than us? It is becauſe, in thoſe countries, the cedar may be turned into the hyſſop: I may be to-morrow what the wretch whom

whom I relieve is to-day. It is, doubtleſs, more convenient to retain our rank of nobility, without the neceſſity of being virtuous.

It muſt however be allowed, that many wiſe nations admitted hereditary ſucceſſion in their inſtitution of nobility. Rome had her knights and patricians; but Rome, that aimed at inſpiring a nobleneſs of ſoul likewiſe, ſubjected them to cenſure. When the cenſors made inquiſition into manners, the virtuous alone were undiſturbed at the ſight of their tribunal. Scipio Naſica, and M. Papilius, examining the equeſtrian order, degraded ſeveral knights, whoſe effeminate lives gave offence to a nation that looked on labour as the road to glory. The degradation was entire; for it left them no other rights of citizens but the privilege of paying

taxes. If the behaviour of a knight did not deſerve ſo ſevere a chaſtiſement, the cenſors contented themſelves with depriving him of the horſe which the republic maintained for him: the ſhame of a public reprimand was the higheſt of all puniſhments. No poſt, rank, or dignity, was exempt from the juriſdiction of the cenſors. The tribune Duronius, too much addicted to the pleaſures of the table, was expelled the ſenate for oppoſing a law in favour of frugality. Eight other ſenators met the ſame fate, under the cenſorſhip of Fabius, for propoſing to abandon Italy after the fatal day of Cannæ. Fabius did not think it prudent to leave cowards at the head of a brave people. Neither the conſulſhip nor the dictatorſhip was above the reprehenſion of the cenſors. Fabricius excluded from the ſenate Cornelius Rufinus,

who

who had been twice conſul, and once dictator, for having a ſilver veſſel of ten pounds weight; which was looked upon as a pernicious example of luxury, in an age when poverty was conſidered as the mother of virtues.

It is undoubtedly practicable to ſubject the modern nobility in Europe to the controul of cenſors, as the ancients were. Venice will ſhew us, that her inquiſitors (who are nothing more than cenſors of the ſtate, and eſtabliſhed chiefly to reſtrain the nobility) effectually keep them within the bounds of civil equality, moderation, juſtice, ſubmiſſion to the laws, even to ſumptuary laws, ſo mortifying to the vanity of the great and opulent, that they prevent them from giving offence to, and oppreſſing the people; while they

ſecure

ſecure the nobles themſelves from falling under the power of any one man. Need I detail the duty of a cenſor for the nobility in a monarchical government? The cenſors themſelves will find the particular occaſions, and exerciſe their authority agreeably to the genius of the nation. But, to conſider the inſtitution only in the abſtract, it is evident that the ſame things which ſerve to reward the nobility would ſerve to puniſh them. Penſions, titles of honour, places, governments, dignities, and diſtinctions; all the inſignia of courts, which ſhould be conferred only upon the deſerving, ought not to be left in the poſſeſſion of the unworthy. The hopes of obtaining theſe privileges and emoluments firſt excited the nobility to virtue; and the fear of loſing them would keep them ſteady in the ſame courſe. The greater their

ſenſibility of honour is, the more they would fear the power of cenſure; it would give them juſt ideas of true honour, and convince them, for example, that the honour of a duel is the laſt ſtage of brutality a man can arrive at. It would check that phrenzy, not by menacing with death thoſe men that are formed to depiſe it, but by diſmiſſing from the ſervice ſuch gladiators as fight againſt the public good, and by breaking thoſe ſwords they would have employed to bad purpoſes. What man would be fool enough to fight when the irretrievable loſs of his rank muſt be the conſequence of his diſgrace?

The Roman cenſorſhip, ſo ſevere on the nobility, did not ſpare the people. If, among the different tribes of plebeians, any were found whom idleneſs or extravagance had

had reduced to poverty, they were degraded to a lower claſs, deprived of their right of ſuffrage, ſo highly valued, or ſuffered ſuch correction as the caſe required. The moſt deſperate conjunctures, when a connivance at vice ſeemed in ſome meaſure neceſſary, as the aſſiſtance of every one was wanted, were ſo far from relaxing the activity of the cenſors, that it gave them greater weight. Never was the cenſorſhip more formidable than while Hannibal was at the gates of Rome; becauſe nothing leſs than the height of virtue could have preſerved the city in that extremity of diſtreſs.

Under the inſtitution of cenſors it would not be difficult to contrive corrections ſuitable to every claſs of people, and every ſpecies of government. SHAME, that powerful

engine, if properly managed, would furniſh many. It is well known that the philoſopher and legiſlator Charondas, in collecting together the impure remains of Sybaris, with a view to reform them, ordered ſlanderers and falſe accuſers, crowned with heath, and deſerters and cowards, in the dreſs of women, to be led about his new city: a puniſhment ſo ignominious that few could ſurvive it, and was more dreaded by them than death. Executioners could not have wrought ſo good an effect on public manners.

How many other modes of correction might be made to ariſe even out of the very advantages that are enjoyed by every claſs of people! All places held *durante bene placito* carry with them a fear of deprivation. All employments have ſome prerogatives that may be

be taken away from ſuch as miſbehave, if they deſerve not a total diſmiſſion. Annuitants, that help only to conſume, without producing any thing, or rendering any ſervice to the ſtate, may be aſſeſſed higher in the public taxes. Merchants and mechanics, of a diſorderly life, may be ſubjected to pecuniary fines, to be employed for the benefit of thoſe who are juſt entering on the ſame occupations.—The populace, who have nothing but their bodies to anſwer for their behaviour, ſhould receive corporal puniſhment. A traveller has obſerved, that China is governed by the STICK. This may be true with reſpect to the dregs of the people: and the like practice ſucceeds in Germany with the ſoldiery, whoſe diſcipline is ſo much commended.

Cenſure

Cenſure and law purſue different roads. The law, in puniſhing crimes, views them always with the ſame eye, and ſentences with the ſame rigour, without regarding degrees in puniſhments, as there are in offences. Cenſure, in proſecuting vice, judiciouſly accommodates itſelf to time, place, circumſtances, and to the paſſions of the profligate ſhe wiſhes to reclaim. We are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, we are ſhocked at reading the condemnation of the CHILD at Athens who pulled out the eyes of quails, as well as that of the AREOPAGITE, who killed a ſparrow which took refuge in his boſom to avoid a hawk. In matters of this ſort the law was ſilent; but the guardians of manners foreſaw that this ſanguinary diſpoſition might one day become fatal to the citizens.

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The law can only puniſh. Cenſure would point out to government proper objects of reward, which, as well as chaſtiſements, may be infinitely varied. Greece and Italy, with only their crowns of parſley, oak, laurel, and gold, with precedency at the theatres, pictures, ſtatues, ovations, triumphs, diſtribution of money, corn, and land, produced heroes and good citizens. China, at this time, by their variegated ſcarfs, by bonnets ornamented with figures of birds, by titles of diſtinction affixed to the houſes of the deſerving, and funeral honours, gives birth and encouragement to virtues and abilities. There is a nation in Europe * that offers conſiderable prizes to the inventors of uſeful arts; that grants a bounty on the exportation of corn, which is ſcarce permitted in other

* England.

places;

places; that affords every poſſible ENCOURAGEMENT to its marine; that leaves titles and poſts of honour acceſſible by every citizen without diſtinction; that furniſhes frequent examples of exalted merit to raiſe a ſpirit of emulation in others; a nation that erects monuments to her illuſtrious men in public edifices, and even among the tombs of her kings; and knowing well how to puniſh with rigour, knows alſo how to reward with magnificence. If this nation perſeveres in ſuch inſtitutions, it is to be feared ſhe will not permit others to dip their hands into the ſea, and will acquire univerſal dominion in the new world, unleſs ſhe be there conquered by her own power. In a public garden *, embelliſhed by nature and art, and enlivened by muſic and feſtivity, ſhe has

* Vauxhall.

placed capital pictures, wherein Victory is repreſented crowning the admirals and generals, whoſe merit was conſpicuous in the laſt war. Who can tell how expenſive theſe pictures may prove to other nations? Courage is here inflamed in the very boſom of amuſement. But ſince communities have as much and more need of civil and moral, than of martial virtues; and as, without the firſt, there never were and never will be truly great men, the completion of this good muſt be expected from cenſure alone.

The modern oracle * of future legiſlators has, in his SPIRIT OF LAWS, acknowledged the importance and power of cenſure. "Vir-"tue, ſays he, is not deſtroyed by crimes "alone, but by more trivial faults, by indo-

* Monteſquieu.

"lence

" lence and ſupineneſs, by a certain luke-
" warmneſs in the love of our country; by
" the force of bad examples, and by the firſt
" ſtages of corruption; all which growing
" evils ſhould be corrected by cenſors; that
" the moſt important of all laws is that which
" regulates manners; that more ſtates have
" been brought to ruin by the violation of
" them, than by the violation of the laws;
" that vices ſhould be prevented from be-
" coming crimes; that it is much more com-
" mendable to hinder offences, than to pu-
" niſh them; and this is the duty of cenſors."
He adds, " that the Ephori at Sparta knew
" how to mortify the weakneſſes of kings, gran-
" dees, and people; that the Areopagus at
" Athens was itſelf ſubject to the cenſorſhip;
" and under the emperors many new laws
" were enacted at Rome, which, when a re-
" public, it had no occaſion for, becauſe

" the cenſors corrected the diſorders at their " firſt appearance."

However, after this homage paid to the cenſorſhip, he aſſerts, " that it is uſeleſs in " monarchies;" and gives this reaſon for it, " that monarchies are founded upon HONOUR, " and that it is the nature of honour to have " the whole univerſe for cenſors."

One hardly dares to oppoſe the ſentiments of ſuch a man; but he did not himſelf affirm upon the word of others; and was ſenſible that inquiry and inveſtigation lead to truth.

The univerſe is a very complaiſant cenſor. It leaves bad men in poſſeſſion of their places, dignities, emoluments, honours, and reputation. If ſuch are ſecretly deſpiſed, they are publicly reverenced; and the ſame

circles

circles that aſperſe them in their abſence, welcome their approach with congratulation and feſtivity. Thus lulled aſleep by general adulation, ſtrangers to the unfavourable reports that prevail, and peaceably enjoying the comforts of life, what can be expected from degenerate mortals but that they ſhould lie ingulphed in vice, without fear or remorſe? But cenſure would raiſe inquietude in their minds, and rouſe them to virtue.

To admit into monarchies no other cenſor than HONOUR, is it not to depend too much upon the perfection of human nature? HONOUR has not been found ſufficient among ſuch nations as raiſed altars to it. It was certainly in eſtimation with the Romans when they ſent back to Pyrrhus his treacherous phyſician; when, after the unfortunate battle of Cannæ, they refuſed to ranſom the priſoners

that had ill defended themſelves, and forbad even the women to lament their loſs; when they choſe rather to command gold than to receive it; when they thought the public eſteem a great heritage to leave their children; when they diſdained to ſign any treaty of peace but as conquerors; when a glorious death was deemed preferable to a life of obſcurity; when every order of citizens made ſuch great ſacrifices to the grandeur of the Roman name; and it was preciſely at this time, at this very time of HONOUR, that the cenſorſhip exerted its utmoſt rigour.

The ſame author, after confining the uſe of cenſors to republics, adds, however, that the EXAMPLE OF CHINA SEEMS TO CONTRADICT THIS RULE. It is an exception of great weight, and may ſerve as a leſſon of inſtruction to other monarchies. Subjects of monarchs!

monarchs! of whatever rank you are, do you dread the power of cenſure? The more you dread it, the more you ſtand in need of it.

In the days of old Cato the profligate at Rome conſpired together againſt this inſtitution. Although enfeebled it ſtill maintained its ground. The Verres, the Anthonys, the Catalines, the proſcriptions, gave the finiſhing ſtroke to its power, and it expired with manners and the republic. Auguſtus, who became the greateſt monarch upon earth, reeſtabliſhed it: a proof that he conceived the ſame advantages might be derived from it in a monarchy as it had given riſe to in a republic. But his ſucceſſors, a Tiberius, who hated every man of worth; a ſimple Claudius, a Nero, and a Caligula, monſters of debauchery and cruelty, could not be ex-

pected to ſupport a tribunal which perſecuted vice, and encouraged virtue.

Let us now collect together the part of the plan I here preſent. A plan that would reſtore to their ancient vigour the three primitive powers of father, huſband, and maſter; a plan that would divide a large country, too extenſive to be governed in one body, into ſmall claſſes, all of them ſubject to the inſpection of cenſors; and, by their means, brought near to the ſource of government; a plan that would render vice contemptible and wretched, virtue honourable and happy. This plan of a well-conſtituted nation may merit ſome attention.

Were I to propoſe an inſtitution entirely new and unheard-of, it ought not to be rejected without examination. Columbus was, at

at length, liſtened to on his diſcovery of a new world. But this inſtitution has been attended with the greateſt ſucceſs among thoſe nations who aimed at the introduction of manners. ONE WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, as a modern author expreſſes himſelf, BURN WITH THE FEVER OF VIRTUE LIKE THE SPARTANS. A people who had deſtroyed all diſtinction of private property muſt neceſſarily become enthuſiaſts for the public weal. Such a fever is very uncommon. But, at all events, a leſs heated diſpoſition would produce many virtues, and few vices; and this is all that can be expected from human nature.

This plan, which I have ſearched hiſtory for, is perhaps ill adjuſted, and ill explained. If the learned would employ their time in ſetting it forth to greater advantage, they would

would merit more applauſe from mankind than by tracing the path of a comet, or by adding other ſtars to thoſe already explored. This plan more eſpecially concerns a ſtateſman and a prince. But let it be remembered, that if they depart from the two given points of PUNISHMENT and REWARD, they will fail in their deſign.

The great difficulty conſiſts in dividing and uniting the whole maſs of people in ſuch a manner, that theſe two ſprings may operate with juſtneſs, facility, and expedition.

Being the other day deeply engaged, and fatigued with ruminating upon my ſcheme, I fell aſleep; and, in a dream, ſaw a living pyramid. The baſe of it was immenſe. It repreſented a vaſt people. The other orders, as the ſuperfices leſſened, and the ſplendor increaſed, ſurpaſſed

ſurpaſſed each other, at diſtances marked by merit. On the ſummit preſided government. All was in regular motion, every one endeavouring to raiſe himſelf to a higher ſtep, or to prevent his falling to a lower. Each gathered ſtrength by looking up to government, whoſe attentive eye directed the diſtribution of good and evil. What moſt delighted me in this grand appearance was, to find that the fountain of bleſſings ſtreamed without ceaſing, while the ſource of evils was almoſt exhauſted. I awoke, and all vaniſhed. A poet has ſaid, that the dreams of kings are the calamities of the people:

Quidquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

He undoubtedly ſpoke of wicked kings. If ſovereigns can thus realize their dreams, we need not deſpair of ſound morals, and public felicity.

Many

Many moraliſts, charmed with the SACRED FABLE OF THE THISTLE *, extol a government where the prince is rendered incapable of doing harm. This would be only a partial good. It is at leaſt as neceſſary to take from ſubjects all inclination to be wicked. They will ceaſe to be ſo when they find, by experience, miſery in vice, and happineſs in virtue.

Governors and fathers of the people! if the manners of your ſubjects be not virtuous, you will never reign with ſafety, happineſs, or glory. Neither poets or hiſtorians, philoſophers, moraliſts, or preachers, will ever render them ſo. Some few princes have ſucceeded in the attempt. It is government alone that can work this miracle. You are

* Judges, chap. ix.

called

called the images and repreſentatives of God. He conſigns to you the direction of this world; but in the other he is the rewarder and avenger. Be you both the one and the other here below.

If the tranquillity of families; if the proſperity of the people; if the ſplendor of ſtates depend not upon good morals; if the God that created us reſembled the divinity of Epicurus, who, regardleſs of human affairs, neither offended by vice, or honoured by virtue, contents himſelf with his own happineſs in the enjoyment of eternal repoſe, it would then be needleſs to diſquiet ourſelves about the cultivation of manners. But the welfare of the whole world demands it.

Civilized and corrupted nation! whatever clime you inhabit, it is not ſufficient to admire wiſdom in repreſentation. If you perſiſt in referring the reign of virtue to the fabulous age of Saturn, little remains to be ſaid to you on that ſubject.—Let it be ſo; enjoy the moments which Heaven in forbearance grants you; drink deep of the cup of iniquity; intoxicate yourſelves with the poiſon of deſtructive flatterers, till the citizens, urged into that general diſtruſt which open and ſhameleſs profligacy creates, conceive no ſecurity but in the deſtruction of one another; till the people, diſcovering nothing reſpectable in the rich and great, inſult, moleſt, and deſpoil them of their poſſeſſions; till all the orders of the ſtate, running headlong on each other, under the weight of every vice, break aſunder the bands of laws and concord; till, in ſhort, there ſhall re-

main neither juſtice, honeſty, council, ſtrength, or courage. At ſuch a period, perhaps, ſome barbarous, or lately civilized, though leſs corrupted nation, will deſcend, ſword in hand, and impoſe their own laws and manners upon you. Such was the fate of the Roman empire, and of every other ſtate, when totally corrupted.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 4, line 7, for *submiſſion*, read *ſubmerſion*.
P. 5, l. 16, eraze *comma* after grandchildren.
l. 17, for *founded*, read *found*.
P. 8, l. 4, for *dare*, read *dores*.
P. 9, l. 3 and 5, for *has*, read *haſt*.
l. 17, for *on*, read *in*.
P. 11, l. 6, for *Hermenigrelte*, read *Hermenigilde*.
P. 12, l. 5, for *depoſition*, read *depoſitum*.
P. 20, l. 14, for *Bourdalone*, read *Bourdaloue*.
P. 22, l. 17, for *Exegotes*, read *Exegetes*.
P. 29, in note 1ſt, for *veſtituto*, read *veſtibulo*.
P. 31, l. 4, for *him*, read *himſelf*.
Note 13, read *Tiſiphonè*, & *torvos*, inſtead of *trivos*.
P. 73, l. 18, for *deſired*, read *deviſed*.
P. 90, l. 11, for *Hias*, read *Hiao*.
P. 98, l. 5, for *in*, read *to*.
P. 118, l. 5, for *this*, read *the*.
P. 122, l. 2, for *Cervilius*, read *Carvilius*.
P. 135, l. 13, for *Popilius*, read *Popilius*.